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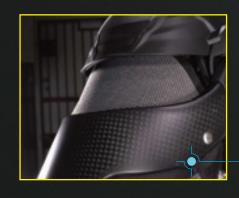
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COMMENT

RIDING BIKES off-road - no matter what your chosen sport or the level you compete at - calls for certain qualities that the everyday bod in the street doesn't necessarily possess. Courage is one.

Determination is another. But perhaps the most important attribute is a wafer-thin vein of masochism running from arse to beak.

Back in the '80s when I was young,

dumb and full of all the stuff healthy teenagers should be brimming with I used to ride mega one-lap trials up in the wilds of Cumbria. I'm talking seven hours on a bike in mostly crappy weather, plastered in mud with soaking wet Ellgrens stuck to your skin as you attempt to negotiate your way across a misty, featureless moor. Then there were all the New Year's Day trials at Back Cowm where after 20 minutes it became impossible to change gear or brake properly because of a lack of sensation in

frozen fingers and toes.

As I got older I started to hurt myself physically and mentally – riding the odd enduro, a few twinshock scrambles, the stupidfest otherwise known as Weston. And by this point I was doing it with a hangover as well. The point I'm labouring to make is that riding bikes hurts. Apart from the obvious bruises and breaks and aching muscles there are the creaky knees that make it hard to get out of bed years after you've stopped riding regularly and which get gradually worse the older you get. But it's part and parcel of riding bikes and thanks to the masochist gene it's something we're all prepared to put up with.

Of course, when you're riding for a living rather than just for fun it's a different matter and injuries take on a whole new meaning. Instead of a few days or weeks watching daytime TV and waiting for the CICA cheque to land on your doormat you've got the stress of needing to get back into action ASAP while your hard-fought fitness fades away and your rivals keep notching up the points.

It's happened to Gordon Crockard for two seasons on the trot and after sitting down with him for the interview in this month's issue I realized that even when the physical injuries have healed the time on the sidelines can cause all sorts of other problems with self-belief and confidence that take real mental toughness to overcome. Luckily, despite the ***tstorm that's blown his way for the past two years, Gordy's got the iron will to get over all that..

The most notable casualty of the last month has been factory Kawasaki man Stephen Sword who badly busted his leg in Germany. Swordy's had his fair share of injuries and always come back fighting but this is his worst so far so it will be a real test of his desire to get back out there banging bars. Steve, we're all gutted for you and already looking forward to seeing you back on a bike again...

Finally this month, if you're not aware that Matterley Basin is hosting the British

GP on June 17/18 then I suggest you extract your head from your heinie, check out the preview that starts on page 28 and then get on the blower and

order your tickets. Now! Hopefully, I'll be seeing you all there...



Work on track for British GP

THE DIGGERS are in, Johnny Douglas Hamilton's in the driving seat and the track's taking shape at Matterley Basin for the British GP on June 17/18.

Toby Fuller nipped across to the venue near Winchester at the start of June for our exclusive pics and although it's clear there's still a lot of work to be done the fact that the job of constructing the track is under way is cause for celebration.

As well as conventional track building machinery, JDH and the team are using huge crushers to reduce the flints uncovered by the fleet of bulldozers into fine gravel which will then be used as part of the track surface.

Billy MacKenzie, arguably our best bet for home-grown glory at the GP, is chomping at the bit to see the finished article.

"I think Johnny's record on the Isle of Wight, Matchams Park and at Sun City in South Africa proves that he is one of the best when it comes to cool tracks that are fun for the riders and spectacular for the fans," reckons Billy.

The fact that there is only one British round this season and that it takes place at a circuit that is new for all of us means that it should be really exciting. The British fans are always the best when it comes to the noise, supporting the local riders and generally making an awesome atmosphere and that is why we always love it when the GP comes around. I just hope I can win again and give them something to go home happy about."

Giuseppe Luongo, president of world championship promoters Youthstream, is confident that the event will be worthy of its GP status.

"Bike-it Promotions have already done so much work," says Giuseppe. "They have made a big investment and Steve Dixon has a lot of experience in world championship racing and knows the high level we want. I am confident that we will see a great occasion and it will be an important preparation for the Motocross of Nations a few months later."

A special bus service from Winchester has been scheduled for the GP weekend with pick-up points

at the train station and by the King Alfred statue. The buses will run every 30 minutes from 7.30am to noon for the trip to the track and from 4pm until 6.30pm for the return journey.

• For more information including ticket sales and accommodation check out our GP preview that starts on page 28.



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WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

The GOAT's jersey and packaging must be won

RC IS without doubt MX's Greatest Of All Time. And now thanks to our bestest buddies (that's the folks at Fox Europe) we (that's DBR) can offer you (that's you) the chance to do what RC does best (that's win)!

And if you're lucky enough to answer our cunning question correctly and then have your entry picked out from our lucky box first then not only will you win a brown cardboard box with some stamps and parcel tape stuck to it, you'll also win RC's signed Fox race jersey.

To win the prize package (that's the box, parcel tape, stamps and RC's signed Fox race jersey) all you have to do is tell us the answer to this really simple question. What is the GOAT's real name?

s it? A) Ricky Carmichae

- B) James 'Bubba' Carmichael
- C) Charles 'Charlie' Carmichael
- D) Roger de Carmichael
- E) Billy Gruff

When you think you know the answer we'd like you to write it (that's the answer) on the back of a postcard or sealed down envelope (that's an envelope you've sealed down before writing anything on it) along with your name, address, the number 52, the letter G and a daytime telephone number. Then on the front you should write 'GOAT comp', DBR Magazine, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe LA4 4AG.

When you've done all that stick a stamp on it and chuck it in your nearest post box! The first answer drawn out of our lucky box after the closing date of July 13 wins all that stuff we talked about before. Good luck GOAT fans!



Tommy Church, shortly before being passed in a corner by Sutty!

RUMBLE IN RHAYADER

Britain's premier mid-week motocross series gets off to a flyer at Cwmythig Hill

GP STARS Gordon Crockard and Tommy Church take home the lion's share of the big cash prizes in front of over 5000 race fans at round one of the PAR Homes/Bache's Bargains Welsh Open motocross championships.

With big money prizes on the line for both the three-moto Open Expert event and the evening ending dash for cash races the action comes thick and fast.

It's Monster Mark Hucklebridge who wins the opening gambit as the Crock Star comes through the pack for second but it's a different story in the following two motos as there's no stopping defending champ Brad Anderson who takes the overall win. But the big money races are still to come and they're the split capacity dash for cash Grand Finals.

After a tough night spent battling in the pack against the 450s, TC comes out firing on all cylinders to take the win in the 250F class on his Molson Kawasaki. Maximum Solutions Suzuki's Alex Snow takes second with PAR/KRM Honda's Steven Clarke rounding out the podium.

With Anderson on something of a win-streak the bumper crowd expect the north-easterner to take another fine win on the Pioneer Yamaha but Crockard has other ideas. Gordy grabs the holeshot and keeps his nose in front for the full 10 minutes while Anderson desperately seeks a way past the flying Ulsterman.

But there's nowt Brad can do and he has to settle for second behind the Wulfsport Honda team-leader while Mark Jones takes third.

The final two rounds of the cracking Wednesday night series are all set to go off on June 14 and July 12. As always the first race leaves the line at 6:45 so make sure you blag the afternoon off work and get your ass down there. For more details check out www.rdmcc.co.uk

GRIMBO TAKES SSDT

Highland win for Sherco star

Words by g2f.co.uk

EVEN A last day crash and five time penalties can't prevent Graham Jarvis recording his fourth Scottish Six Days Trial win. Despite the late scares the Sherco star runs out a comfortable victor, finishing 10 marks clear of Ben Hemingway who comes home as runner-up for the second year in a row.

Graham dominates the Highland event by leading all but the first two days, winning three days outright and managing to come home clean on two of the days.

While it's a slightly surprised lan Austermuhle who eventually takes the last podium place, it's Scottish hero Gary MacDonald who gets the locals excited as he leads on day one with just a single mark loss. But his glory is short-lived as he drops to 11th place on day two, allowing Michael Brown to run the yellow leaderboard with a cumulative tally of two marks. Jarvis moves from third to second place during the same period and is poised to take control as Wednesday arrives.

With just two days to go Jarvis now leads from James Dabill with Brown and Hemingway in third and fourth. Although Friday's run around the scenic peninsula and ferry ride back to the parc ferme has little effect on the top order it sees leading female rider Laia Sanz carted off to hospital to get 13 stitches in her knee after hitting a car on a single track road. Sanz is lying in 28th place when she drops out and is heading many well-respected national riders.

Dabill and Brown make Jarvis' last day much easier as the young Beta duo miscalculate their time cards and incur heavy penalties. This demotes them to sixth and 10th places and wrecks what otherwise is a great week for the youngsters. European champion Shaun Morris takes the best first timer award in a creditable fourth position overall.

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Every care is taken in compiling the contents but the proprietors assume no responsibility for any effect rising there from. We welcome unsolicited manuscripts and photographs but accept no responsibility for their loss, damage or total disappearance. Cover: RC's in control as the AMA men head outdoors for the Nats (HoppenworldiPlotz) Contents main image: After his contents page crash in last month's DBR it's good to see Nunny back in control (Sutty)

Carl Hunn replica 250SX-F must be won

OKAY, THIS is it, your third and final chance to win a brand new '06 KTM 250SX-F with a full Carl Nunn EA DBS Factory Graphics kit. And on top of that the very lucky winner will also get to take home Nunny's niffy Fox jeans and jersey from the first MX2 British championship race at Matchams plus a pair of his Spy goggles!

The competition kicked off in our May issue and continued in the June DBR before signing off this month so by now you should have either already sent in two entries – and plenty of people have – or be waiting for this final KTM-related question before stuffing all three into an envelope and sending them off.

Remember, each entry requires only one correct answer – this way if you've missed one of the competition issues you can still enter but, better still, if you've got all three mags you've got three separate shots at winning the SX-F. All we ask is that entries are submitted on official entry forms (no photocopies, computer scans etc).

Official closing date is July 7 with the first correct entry drawn at random after this date earning themselves the bike, kit and goggles...



A: Ben Townley

QUESTION #3

Which KTM-backed rider won the '04 world MX2 title?

Cut out this coupon and send it to 'Win a KTM', Dirt Bike Rider, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancs LA4 4AG.

Closing date for entries is July 7

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STEPHEN SWORD OUT OF ORDER!

SWORDY GOES DOWN HARD IN GERMANY AND BUSTS HIMSELF UP, FORCING AN EARLY END TO HIS '06 SEASON

WORDS BY STEPHEN SWORD PHOTO BY ALEX HODGKINSON

NOT GOOD news this month – as some of you should know I smashed my ankle up pretty good at the German GP! The weekend before I had a couple of solid second place finishes at Matchams Park so things were looking good – but in MX you never know what's just around the corner.

So one week later I found myself staring at the walls of a German hospital as I woke up from a general anaesthetic. I didn't really know what day it was but by my side were my wonderful fiancée Jodie and my dad who had been waiting for me to come round.

I looked down and saw this metal cage with pins sticking in my leg and foot and knew it wasn't good news. I didn't know whether I was going to walk again, never mind race again and that was a very scary feeling – then they told me I'd also broke my back. The communication in the hospital wasn't good as they didn't speak English so everything sounded very blunt with no explanation of what they were going to do to fix me up.

I arranged an immediate transfer to a hospital in Belgium where I was in the good hands of Dr Claus who a lot of the top GP riders use. I had x-rays and scans but they couldn't operate because the swelling was so bad. I found out that I've broke my tibia and fibula just above the ankle joint and smashed my heel to pieces. I also found out that my broken back was an old injury that I didn't know about and I'm very pleased to say that it's fine!

I stayed in hospital for a week but they still couldn't operate because of the swelling. I was getting very down because of the pain but luckily I had Jodie with me to keep me positive.

The doc decided to let me go home for a week while the swelling reduced before operating. I still had the external fixture on but it was great to be home even if it was for just a week. We then drove back out and I was operated on the same day. They fixed the tib and fib with plates and screws but couldn't do anything about the heel because it would be too much stress on the foot in one hit so I'm going back out in three weeks.

A had some good and bad news after the op. The good news was that the foot was in perfect position and the fractures were straight—the bad news was that I had an infection. All kinds of stuff was going through my head, the worst being that I could lose my foot. I was very sick for a few days but then the antibiotics kicked in and things started to improve—although I had to stay in for a full week to make sure the drugs flushed the infection out.

I've had great support from my team — especially my mechanic Luka and Jan the team manager. They came to see me several times and helped keep my spirits up. Other people who visited me included Tom and Lisa Church, Tyla Rattray, Manuel Priem, Lewis Gregory, Willy and Gunter from Kayaba, Angela and Renee, Big Dave and Fabio from CAS Honda and Josh Coppins.

Josh actually came a few times and it was good to talk to him because he was in a similar position – if not worse – a few years ago. I have to thank all these people who visited and everyone who's left messages on my website. It's great to know I have so much support!

I'm currently resting up at home and my leg's in a half-cast so I can take it off every now and again. I've got exercises to do and already have some movement in my foot which is good. It's going to be some months before I throw my leg over a bike again but it will give me time to think, learn from others and come back a stronger Stephen Sword in 2007.

I'll probably go to watch the British GP to see the fans and to be a fan for the day myself. Apart from that I will have World Cup fever watching all of the matches. Poor Jodie is having to do everything at the moment – right now she's out there mowing the lawn – but I'm sure I can make it up to her with a few shopping sprees.

Okay, I'm going to leave you all with a little bit of a motivational message this month. Anyone out there who's struggling to get out of bed early in the morning to go training just think of me – I'd kill just to be able to go for a run or to ride my bike!



Anderson doubles up at Hawkstone Park

TWO HOLESHOTS and two wins at Hawkstone show that Pioneer Yamaha's Brad Anderson is serious about hanging onto his British Four-Stroke crown.

Championship leader Mark Jones bins his PAR Homes Honda in the opener after a coming together with team-mate Alex Rach. He makes it back through the field to fourth behind second-placed finisher Wayne Smith and Glen Phillips before chasing Anderson all the way to the flag in race two.

After Tommy Searle's domination of the '05 U21s, this year's series is turning into a corker with the five races so far throwing up five different winners.

This time the victor on the day is 15-year-old Jake Nicholls aboard his Motovision Suzuki who scoops his first overall by following his first podium in race one behind Ray Rowson and Lulu Gregory with a race two win from Rowson and Jim Murro.

After three rounds just 15 points separate the top five with the leading trio – Rowson, Steven Clarke and Murro – sharing the points lead on 111 points apiece!



ONFIRE DEAL!

AS WELL as sponsoring big names like Josh Coppins, Tyla Rattray and Tommy Searle, Onfire have also been helping out the sport's grass roots club riders.

To be considered as an Onfire sponsored rider please send your profile to <code>louise@onfire.co.uk</code> or write into Onfire Ltd, Stretton Business Park, Brunel Drive, Stretton, Burton-on-Trent DE13 0BY.



WIN! WIN! WIN!

NASS tickets up for grabs

THE NATIONAL Adventure Sports Show (that's NASS to you and me) celebrates its 10th birthday this year with a move to Birmingham's NEC on July 29/30 – and we've got four weekend tickets up for grabs.

NASS features a big mix of extreme sports including BMX, skate and MTB elements but it's the FMX content that steals the show every time. This year the godfathers of British freestyle – that's Chris Brock, Gary Taylor and Jamie Squibb – are scheduled to appear and on top of demos there's a two-day comp billed as the world freestyle MX championship.

To win a weekend ticket plus an Eastpak bag and some DC goodies all we need to know is the reigning NASS freestyle champ?

ls it

A) Gary Taylor

- B) Ash Davies
- C) David Wiggins
- D) Flyin' Ryan Griffiths

When you've figured out the answer write it down on the back of a sealed envelope or postcard and send it off to us at 'Gary Taylor is the reigning NASS freestyle champ', DBR, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancs LA4 4AG. Entries close on July 13 with the first four correct answers drawn randomly at random winning the swao.

For more info on NASS check out the dedicated event website at www.nass2006.com





AMCA UPDATE

FACTORY PHIL Mercer wins the Open class, Rick Du-Feu brings it home in the 125s and Simon Bradford and Colin Dunkley come out top of the three-wheelers as the AMCA solos and sidecars join forces at Matchams.

Mercer's two wins and a third are good enough for the overall on the day from Elliot Barrs and Charlie Hollis while down in the 125s it's a case of consistency winning the day for Du-Feu. His 2-2-3 card does the business over race two winner Mark Hooley and Brad O'Leary but he also benefits from Rob Clitheroe's misfortune after the winner of the opening and final motos DNFs the second with mechanical problems.

In the sidecars the Bradford/Dunkley pairing are proving to be untouchable this season and they maintain their unbeaten record at Matchams with a full-house of wins. Mark Banks and Peter Girling take second on the day from Nicky and Jason Davies.



WORDS BY GORDON CROCKARD

ANOTHER MONTH, another column – time flies by so quick with the busy programme I've got. I love it to be honest. I'm never bored, ever! I've successfully made it into June without getting injured and for me that's a pretty different story to the last couple of years.

I feel improvement each week now and that's good news all round as I obviously want to get on the top step of that podium, at British level initially and eventually at GPs. Bit by bit I've got better and that's what drives me to persist with the practice, training at a level necessary for improvement. My dad's been helping me lately and getting involved with technique on the track which is great because he's on my wavelength and very, very determined to succeed – like me also.

Tomorrow I'm flying to Bulgaria and looking forward to some GP track time. Although I'm now entering the sixth round I feel like I've only rode in one grand prix so far and that was Portugal. Zolder was round one and I didn't qualify as my bike broke and the next was Spain where, while in sixth, I got smacked in the mouth by a huge rock. Then Portugal where I got 12th and 13th. Germany was looking positive in practice but I partially dislocated my knee joint which allowed it to snap shut nipping data some of my cartilage. It wasn't until after I got home I could get it sorted.

So clearly I wasn't in the top 15 in the championship to receive the travel indemnity cover from the promoters to go to Japan. This gave me one positive and that was getting back home for two weeks. Amy and I enjoyed the break from the 24-hour Max and Paddy experience on the road in the camper.

At first the weather was fantastic and I enjoyed racing a 250F in a round of the Ulster Supercross series up at Ballymoney. In the morning and afternoon before I raced I coached some kids who were invited to come to the Red Bull MX Academy. Great effort was displayed by all the riders and some day they could be writing for DBR!

I made the trip across from my home in Northern Ireland to Cumbria to compete in the third round of the Wulfsport British Masters series. I'm glad I did because winning both races sure did put a smile on my face. The venue is superb and perhaps in the future we could see some more major races at that end of the country.

It started raining on the Sunday in Cumbria and I don't think it actually stopped for a week-and-a-half but my dad and I practised regardless. I was due to race again at home on a 250F but sadly the meeting was cancelled due to the track and paddock being too wet.

With the camper reloaded it was time for another road trip and down to Cornwall for the British round at Landrake. You'll notice in this

month's issue that I visited the DBR hood and got my picture taken by Sutty with help from his assistant Sean. We also had the full-on interrogation interview as well, just to give me the opportunity to make some more excuses about why I'm not reigning champion of the universe and, of course, to slag off and blame all my pervious teams! As if having a column every month isn't a big enough chance.

The traffic to Landrake was hectic. So many caravans, campers, people carriers, estate cars, vans etc were obviously heading south in hope of some better weather for the Bank Holiday weekend. Looking back now it was pretty much the story of my weekend...traffic! I dived into the first turn in the lead and began turning the corner like my daddy taught me to and my fellow holeshot hopefuls smashed into me like I was the pin and they were the bowling ball, sending me end over end into the ropes.

Peak smashed off, hand guards smashed off, bike bent, stupid rider bloody sore all over and best of all...dead last. That was how the first race started and I persevered through 32 riders in total and finished eighth.

Next race I went into the first corner in second and passed Huck into the lead through the whoops. I was now in a simple scenario. Go as fast as I can and if anyone can catch and pass me they deserve to win. So off I go on this strategy and wouldn't you know my chain snaps at the link before I've even completed one lap. Race over. I developed Tourettes for about half-an-hour and was embarrassingly letting my anger be known! Any parents who had any children under the age of 21 at the race and who were near where the chain breaking took place, I can only apologise for what they may have heard.

Swiftly moving on, I made it up to Rhayader for some more evening motocross in the heart of Wales. Short, sharp frantic racing is the order at these events and the crowd turned out en mass to witness the action. I got second, second, third and first. Thankfully, the first was in the 'Dash for Cash' and my efforts were rewarded with a welcome £250 for the race.

Okay folks, many thanks for reading and supporting me at the races – it means a lot to me. Get well soon Swordy and well done Billy for winning in Japan. You should base yourself in Japan and fly to all the Euro races as you seem to perform at your best when you're jet-lagged! As for me, if you see me on / track heading your way at the British Grand Prix do nothing other than blast your air horn and wave profusely until your arm falls off. Not much to ask really, just pure British Bulldog encouragement!

See ya then...





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BRITISH GP!

Can Billy and the boys do the business at Matterley Basin?



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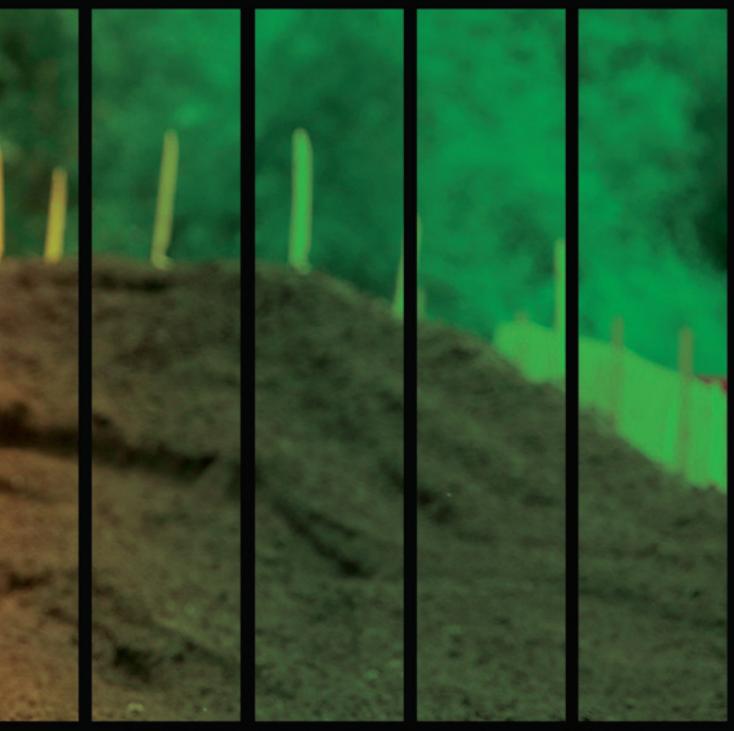
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"It felt like people had forgotten about me. It was cool to come back and show people that I could ride a bike. It was a good day."

-DV 12





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COUNTION

TIMING IS everything and running the 'Endless Summer' headline in last month's Blarney was always going to come back and kick my butt!

A mere two days after the supercross and the rainy season was upon us. Gone be the days when a good MX track was measured by the width and depth of its mandatory river crossing or bog section. Seriously though, the fact that races get cancelled is not really good for the sport now is it?

Yes, there are tracks that take water better than others so with hindsight and preparation when organising a hardpack event it would be prudent to have a Plan B.

Make this a date - Saturday June 24 - when Cookstown and District will host the fifth round of the British Maxxis championship around their GP track with no shortage of regular grand prix contenders in attendance - not to mention the winner of the GP of Japan, Billy MacKenzie, who is no stranger to winning around the Porters Pit venue.

This will be an important event for a number of reasons, one being that it may mark the return of three-time British champ Gordon Crockard to the top step of the podium. GC has been building strong foundations this season and sticking to a strict comeback plan. A superb ride through the field following a first corner crash followed by a broken chain at round four of the series while leading the second moto frustrated the Wulfsport Honda ace - his luck has to change soon.

Bike-It Dixon Yamaha's Martin Barr has had a tough start to the GP season while at British level he continues to move towards the front of the pack. It was at this event last year that I predicted he would break top 10 - which he did. So what about this year? If luck and a good gate are with the aspiring Yamaha star top five is a possibility.

What about the other local interest for Desertmartin? Point-scoring Ricky McKeown will be up for it on home soil, as will Robert Hamilton who recorded two 10th places last season.

The Moto-One guys - McCullough and Garrett - will want to put on a show for their sponsors while Tommy Merton may make an appearance on his new Rainey Brothers Honda 450. In the tough MX2 class Adam McKee and Phil McLaughlin both qualified for round four at Landrake and are looking forward to playing on home sand.

Summer met SX at round one of the MCCNI/Polisport supercross

series. The best attended race of the year so far took place in perfect conditions for both spectators and riders. The McCullough family-prepared circuit was designed for spectacular yet safe racing and while there were a few incidents, no ambulances were started throughout the full 22-race programme.

Playing a supporting role to the pros was a full line-up of enthusiastic youth riders who did a super job of promoting youth MX.

Three pro races and the Dash For Cash left the paying public baying for more as the third annual Ballymoney Bike Fest event came to an end.

Four different Main Event winners are testimony to the tough competition. Martin Barr, Wayne Garrett and Gordon Crockard took a win apiece while local ace Phil McCullough collected £100 per lap in the Dash for Cash.

On the domestic front the aforementioned McC is currently heading both MX1 and MX2 Irish championship points tables with fellow veteran Brian Steele switching back to the bigger class this year after claiming the MX2 crown last year. Wayne Garrett holds third in the table while early season surprise Lindsey Newell's second place in Cork has helped him move into fourth place.

Current Irish champ Mike Sinton had a bad day at the office at Cork – the Tandragee lad usually scores well around the natural terrain off-camber old-school circuit. Some 60 points off the leader at this stage of the game is not where Mike needs to be if he's to regain his title.

MX2 has McCullough and Garrett at the front with Oliver Sandiford Smith falling foul of the hardpack Cork track. Riding for Greame Vigors' VMX Motocross, the young KTM rider crashed on a tricky downhill section of the Vernon Mount circuit resulting in two broken bones. Word is that Ollie is on the mend and may not miss the next round of the championship. Both Ollie and his dad are becoming a welcome feature around Irish race paddocks - get well soon mate.

Third and fourth at this early stage are the two young southern centre hopefuls, Ross Brown on a Solas Honda and CCM Dublin-backed TM rider Stuart Edmondson. These pair are right in the scrap for podium honours in this class this season and could take a moto win in either Gormanstown or Ferns.

See you all at Desertmartin...





















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TO THE EXTREN

DESIGNED TO BE THE SPECTATOR FOCAL POINT OF MODERN DAY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ENDUROS, EXTREME TESTS ARE NOW LOATHED BY MOST RIDERS WHICH KINDA BEGS THE QUESTION JUST HOW EXTREME SHOULD EXTREME BE?

IN THE top left-hand corner on page one of KTM's 950 Super Enduro R promotional brochure, in bright orange letters, is a short attention grabbing sentence that says simply 'extreme is not extreme enough'. It's one of a number of high impact headlines that subconsciously help build a visual image of the bike's capabilities. But when that same sentence is applied to the WEC it most certainly doesn't hold water. Extreme - as far as the WEC is concerned - has certainly become extreme enough.

More than any other topic surrounding the world's premier enduro series, extreme tests are now the most talked about subject in the WEC paddock. Be it riders asking for extreme tests to be modified, riders sounding off about other rider's concerns or organising clubs proclaiming that their extreme test is the best there has ever been extreme tests are the hot potato of the enduro world championship.

In just four short seasons extreme special tests have had a bigger impact on the WEC than any other single change. And as far as many are concerned for all the wrong reasons too. Initially introduced to help make enduro a more spectator friendly sport, the extreme test has come a long way since it was first included in a world championship event in Italy in '92 yet done little to improve the world enduro championship. In fact, the sooner the powers-that-be see sense and ditch the troublesome tests the better as far as I'm concerned.

The idea of introducing extreme tests alongside both enduro and motocross stages was a seemingly harmless one way back when the WEC had no series promoter. First included in Italy - but not counting towards the event's results - the very first extreme test seemed to be exactly what the WEC needed. Easy for spectators to assess, the short, sharp burst of adrenalinecharged entertainment was also great for TV.

Offering a separate prize, those riders focused solely on winning a world title could take their time to complete the series of hazardous natural obstacles while more adventurous riders were

able to give it their all, risk damaging themselves and their bikes and go balls out for glory.

Problems started as soon as the FIM applied pressure on all clubs to include extreme tests in WEC events. If spectators won't travel out of their villages and towns to come and watch enduro then enduro will come to them was the FIM's initial philosophy behind their introduction.

What followed was something that should never have happened. The world's best enduro riders - the same talented, brave, athletic, skilful and determined bunch of riders that were used to battling it out in forests across Europe - were suddenly forced to act like performing seals.

Gone was exciting, natural terrain replaced more often than not with flat, slow speed, man-made extreme tests - often on wasteland on the outskirts of towns. Like a painfully uninteresting circus show, instead of showing off their skill and bravery riders would barely reach speeds of

20mph as they struggled to ride over trials obstacles. As one world champion pointed out at the time enduro bikes have a six-speed gearbox for a reason so why are we now only using two gears?

What had only a season or two before been an exciting new introduction was already giving very boring, very slow and very uninteresting action. The riders weren't happy yet the FIM turned a blind eye. While special tests had been brought closer to civilisation the action had well and truly been left out in the forests.

Disappointingly, things aren't any better today. In fact they are a whole lot worse. There have been some great extreme tests during the past two seasons - the all-natural tests in France in '04 and '05 spring to mind - but there have also been some truly awful man-made tests as well. Now that each organising club must have an extreme test included in their WEC event the ***t has well and truly hit the fan.

Basically there were two things that the majority of the world's best riders asked for when extreme tests were first introduced - that they be included only when suitable natural terrain allowed and that they were run as a separate 'show' for the public. Neither request was listened to.

While watching those that enjoy the challenges of extreme tests is entertaining, watching a rider like David Knight wrestle his factory KTM through a high-speed rutted uphill climb on an enduro test is much

more enjoyable and interesting. Take away the speed and you take away the excitement.

Knowing just how talented Knighter is, watching the world's best enduro rider complete an extreme test without putting either foot down just doesn't do it for me. If I were into watching slow speed bikes hop across logs and up steep climbs I'd go and watch trials.

Extreme tests now have to be all-natural and, well, extremely extreme thanks to an FIM re-think which now means that they are no longer the easy to access, spectator friendly stages they were designed to be.

Combining all the hardest, most difficult sections of enduro and motocross tests into a two-minute stage they have become the motorcycling equivalent of watching paint dry. Too easy for Knighter and a very select group of riders, they are too difficult for the majority of youngsters venturing into the sport for the first time.

Extreme tests are also playing a key role in deciding world titles. Make a mistake on an extreme test – which is easily done – and an event or season worth of hard work can be undone in an instant.

But the most worrying thing about extreme tests is the message they convey about the world's best riders. With the WEC now beamed into hundreds of millions of houses - or whatever the official viewing figures are - the world's best riders are more often than not seen competing at speeds so slow a sun dial could be used to time them or struggling like a bunch of inexperienced beginners - which they're not.

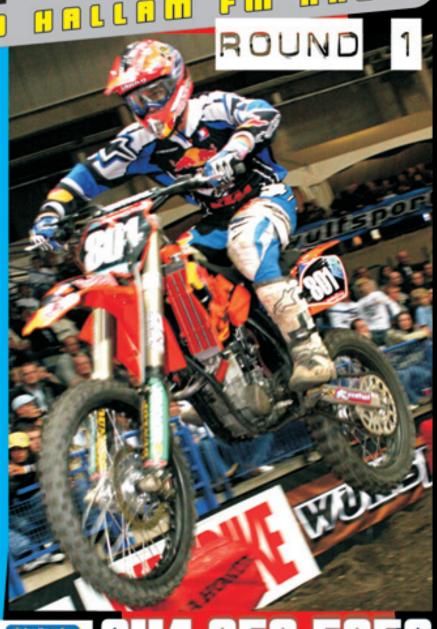
And that certainly isn't good for the image of the WEC...



SUPERCROSS







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GOT SOMETHING TO SAY? WELL HERE'S WHERE YOU SHOULD BE SAYING IT...

Write to Rant at the usual address or email us at rant@dirtbikerider.co.uk All letters/emails must be accompanied by a full address. Oh, and please don't send emails all in capitals. Cheers!

LETTERS WIN PRIZES

It's the kinda deal known in the trade as a double bonus! Write to Rant, get your letter published and you'll win a one-litre trigger bottle of marvellous bike cleaning fluid Muc-Off. And if we rate your letter highly enough you'll also receive our monthly star prize - a pair of Ikon VX1 Pro boots in your chosen size and colour ..





BEZ BETTER

A few weeks ago my friend Bez had a bad off at a track down south - as he came off the handlebars stuck into his stomach.

The medics were quick to get to him and he was taken to hospital. When he got to hospital he had an x-ray which found unwanted free fluids and he'd ripped his intestine and torn his pancreas. That night he had to endure a four-hour operation to put things right.

After a week he was moved up to a hospital in his hometown Leeds. He's now able to drink water, flavoured drinks, tea and coffee. The doctors thought they found a blockage where the damaged bowel was but this may be all clear. A CT scan revealed that he had only one kidney from birth which was quite a shock!

He says he's able to get out of bed no problem now and chase the nurses. He's been in hospital for nearly a month which is a lot longer than the doctors first expected but he's making great progress! Keep fighting Bez! And get well and get riding soon from all your mates on mxtrax.co.uk.

Gaz, Derbyshire

Cheers for the update Gaz! We've been following Bez's progress on mxtrax and it's good to hear he's getting better! Hopefully seeing his pic in DBR will inspire Bez to get out riding again just like a pair of new Ikon boots will motivate you to put in some laps.



PREMATURE SPECULATION

Hi! Did I win that 250 KTM? My postcode was W** 3**. Can you text me if I did or didn't on 0**** 875***?

Tom, via email.

If you'd read the competition rules correctly you'd see that the closing date isn't until July 7. If you win we'll give you a call then!

SAFETY STANDARDS

As a seasoned MXer and avid fan of all things off-road I find it hard to criticise the people and venues which make our sport a reality.

Nonetheless there are venues within the Eastern Centre where the standards of safety and track preparation are severely lacking. At a recent Eastern Centre championship meeting I and other riders were greeted with foot high grass, track stakes thicker than trees and bizarre kicker jumps barely fit for backyard messing let alone an ACU-licensed championship venue.

The end result of these 'obstacles' were needless injuries and riders who are generally ***d off at paying the entry fee! Who is passing these circuits as fit to ride - surely not the same people who scrutinise every inch of great British championship venues such as Lyng, Canada Heights and Hawkstone?

Is it possible that if some of those who 'maintain' these tracks read this they may take on board our suggestions for improvements which have so far fallen on deaf ears? I hope so.

Will, via email

That's a whole big can of worms you're opening up right here. The final call on the safety of the track comes down to the ACU steward - a few of which can't seem to recognise their elbows from their arses or a safe obstacle from something you'd expect in Death Race 2000.

On the other hand the one person who cares about your safety more than anyone else - except yo' mamma - should be yourself. The smart thing to do if you arrive at a track and think it's too dangerous is leave. Also remember that your throttle works both ways - a fifth-gear-pinned 'bizarre kicker jump' feels much safer taken at half-throttle. Yep, I know you're out there racing but at the end of the day what's more important - being able to pay your mortgage or getting eight quid prize money?

Building and setting up tracks takes a lot of time and hard work by people who do it as a hobby. Sometimes these people get it right and sometimes they get it wrong. It's all too easy to criticise these people sometimes they're people who have never ridden a bike themselves and so know no different - but we reckon the best way to make things better is to get involved with the clubs and help set out the tracks and build the jumps etc. You'll often find the best tracks are built by riders for the riders.

Here's a question for you though...if track stakes are made out of material taken from trees is it possible to have ones that are actually thicker than trees themselves?

AND AGAIN...

Did I win the competition? To win the KTM 250? If I have can you send the KTM 250 to W** 3**. Tom, via email

Aaargh not you again! If you'd read the rules of the competition correctly you'd see that the closing date isn't until July 7 and if you win the bike then we'll give you a call and arrange for you to collect it from your local KTM dealer! Oh and can you quit typing your emails in txt spk pls m8?

KNEE-PAD POSER

I have just read through your interview with Everts and Tortelli. In that piece there is a picture of Everts stripping his kit off at Hawkstone Park. In the picture he's wearing a cheap set of Acerbis knee pads of the real old school style. Now I thought everybody is using knee braces at British championship level and especially at GP level due to the big gnarly ruts and the risk of twisting knees badly.

So to see the best motocross rider ever with those old pads on surprised me and our kid quite a bit. I know a lot of riders who have to wear knee braces to feel safe on a bike and then there is Everts wearing those pads that do not give as much support as a brace. Is it for real and can you ask him why he does not wear knee braces?

Justin, Worcestershire

Sorry it took so long to get an answer but now we've got a reply to your question and it's straight from Stefan's championshipwinning cake-hole. "I just can't get used to a knee brace - it feels like making love to a woman with your clothes on," says Stefan sounding somewhat like Swiss Tony. "I just can't get a good feeling on the bike if I use one." So there you have it, Justin, it's all about sensitivity...

AFGHAN BOUND!

I am a British soldier serving out of Afghanistan for six months and as you can imagine it can get frustrating at times. If only I had my KTM out here to kick up some dirt and show the Afghans what we're all about.

One of the bad things is my mates back home are always out and about on their bikes but they're sending me out your magazine to keep me safe and sane! I've been serving out here for a month and I've still got a long way to go so I would appreciate it if you could send me out a little something so I can tick the days away until I get home.

Youngy, Afghanistan

Check your mailbox - something cool is on its way to you!

















Everts most of the way in Spain and Germany, Kevin Strijbos actually won a moto in Spain when the champion made a rare error, Steve Ramon has even had a pole this year and Jonathan Barragan - last man standing at KTM – extended Everts to the chequered flag in Portugal.

And Britain has its own challenger with Ken De Dycker - the current dominator of the UK scene - getting closer by the week.





Multitek Honda's



The 21-year-old has scored 30 points plus at every GP to date and is on medal course after finally making the podium in Japan. When he starts getting out the gate anything is possible.

Julien Bill is the other foreign import on the UK scene this summer and has raced top 10 in every grassland GP of the season and Multitek's Pascal Leuret - though not racing in the UK series - has done likewise in every GP he has started.

And then there are the native Brits. James Noble's early GPs have been erratic in terms of results but sixth in Japan has brought the Yorkshireman back onto the verge of series top 10. Mark Hucklebridge will be looking to get back among the scorers on home turf and the Irish invaders will return with renewed

conviction after jittery starts.

Martin Barr had still to get past the qualifying hurdle as this month's mag went to press but the teenager is a diesel racer when he makes the cut. Meanwhile, the Crock Star has regrouped from his overseas ordeals with confidence-building wins in the UK and desperately needs success to re-establish himself on the world front.

But, if the big boys are the F1 of the off-road sport, the racing supreme will again come in the MX2 class. Already after five GPs the cards are dealt and five youngsters have, not unexpectedly, established themselves at the head of the table. One of them will be champion but which one will take the honours is more than open.

KTM, Kawasaki and Yamaha are the major players in the class and each has at least one title candidate. Orange started the year in front as Tyla Rattray repeated his hat-trick of the end of 2005 to extend his GP roll to six wins but a stutter - if you can call 38 points a bad day in Germany saw the South African's lead decimated and a crash in Japan even lost Styla the red plate.

He has it all to do again and at a third of the way through the series Styla is not even the leading KTM rider. That honour goes to the chameleon Marc De Reuver who has changed from a crash-happy wild boy with just 27 starts in four years to the most consistent man on the track. From the first 10 motos he has never been out of top five and although





he's not won one yet everyone knows he has the speed to do it.

The boy who leads them all one-third of the way through the year is Kawasaki's Christophe Pourcel. The 17-year-old is the technical wizard of the class but despite his tender years also has a level head on his shoulders. He walked both motos in Germany but also showed he can come through the pack in Japan. And do

you remember his amazing charge at Gore Basin last summer?

Defending champ Tony Cairoli has won more motos than anyone else to date but he is also trailing in the points after failing to make top 10 in a moto at each of the first three GPs. Midpack starts and crashes have cost him dear but in Japan the Sicilian holeshot quali and both motos. The most dynamic rider in world



motocross is back on course and closer to the pace than he was mid-summer last term.

But who's the best Brit bet for a win? Billy of course! And who can doubt the ability of the DBR columnist to do so? The opening GP was a nightmare as the Dixon/Bike-it Scot struggled with set-up but he has settled down to regular double figure scores from round two on and in Japan – the scene of his maiden GP win last





summer - Billy Whizz scorched to a repeat win to drag himself back into contention for the world crown.

"There's still a long way to go and I spent those first few GPs finding consistency. That has been missing in the past and now we also have the bike set up for the starts.'

Those are the five for the title but Britain has more potential winners along the line. A year

ago at Matchams Carl Nunn won his first GP moto for five years and he too has beavered away after a jittery start to post his best ride of the campaign so far in Japan.

Gareth Swanepoel who has been hampered by a hand injury in the early rounds progressed even further in the Orient to push the podium for the first time.

And all eyes will also be on Tommy Searle. Just turned 17, Tommy Gun is the revelation of the year, though anyone who saw his conviction on his GP debut last summer at Matchams where he got up twice

off the floor to score points knows that he has the heart to add to the bike skills which have seen him rip his way through the UK youth scene and establish himself already as a winner in the main British championship. His starts need to improve but the flamboyant boy from Kent has learnt to deal with pressure to get into the world top 10.

Jason Dougan and Elliott Banks-Browne for

RWJ and Wulfsport boys Shaun Simpson and Scott Probert complete the UK regulars but Wayne Smith and Brad Anderson have been ripping up the home scene as has Mark Jones in MX1 so there are plenty of our boys to cheer.

Essential info!

WHERE?

Getting to the Matterley Basin circuit couldn't be much easier as the event will be well signposted from both the A31 and A34 roads near Winchester. For all you poseurs with sat-nav - or anyone who uses the free AA route-master service on t'internet – the postal code for Matterley Basin is SO24 0HU. Please be aware that there is no site access from the nearby A272.

How Much?

Pre-purchasers of tickets will find themselves quids in as a hefty discount (£5 for adults and £3 for nippers as well as an exciting free hat offer) can be taken advantage of by calling 0845 456653 or visiting the event website - www.britmxgrandprix.

Tickets will be available on the day at £30 for adults and £15 for nippers aged 10-16. Accompanied children under 10 get in for free so any mature-looking nine-and-a-half-year-olds may want to sort out some ID before the event!

WHY?

If you don't go to the GP we'll hunt you down and kick you in the nuts! Oh and you'll be missing out on one of the best MX GPs of the year!

SOMEWHERE TO STAY?

While we're promised there's plenty of secure on-site camping available, those of you who require a little more comfort when it comes to their sleeping arrangements may want to check out the local tourism websites www.stayinwinchester.co.uk and www.visitwinchester.co.uk







Five years ago Gordon Crockard was one of the brightest stars of world motocross until injuries, machine problems and team disputes culminated in back-to-back nightmare seasons and a king-sized crisis of confidence. Back with Honda for '06, Gordy's aiming to put the past behind him and lay those demons to rest...

Words by Sean Lawless Photos by Sutty

IF ANYONE should be onto a promise with Lady Luck it's Gordon Crockard. Injuries, more injuries, mechanical problems, team problems. and the mother of all crises of confidence have seen the one-time GP winner and world title candidate lurching from set-back to set-back.

The last time we sat down and talked to him

properly was when Sutty flew over in February '05 to meet up with Gordy at his home in Newtownards when he was preparing to mount a comeback from injury with his new Dixon/Bike-it Yamaha team.

This time we're in a lay-by off the quay road in Lancaster and while the story is pretty much

the same - injuries, crisis of confidence, new team – Gordy is another year older, another year wiser and, despite another season he'd rather forget, there's an optimism and

self-confidence about him that harks back to the glory days of GP wins and national titles.

All the way back in Y2K, with GP victories in Spain and Belgium to his mane and his first British title under his belt, Gordon was quoted as saying "your brain's the only thing you need as long as you can stay focussed you can do almost everything". Coming from a man who'd never had a bad injury it's an understandable simplification of what's needed to succeed in the toughest sport of them all

Now, almost six years later, he still agrees





with that statement but adds the proviso "and stay healthy". Perhaps he should add "and stay happy" as well because for the last few years Gordon hasn't been happy with his racing and

Obviously, a catalogue of injuries haven't helped matters but you can't help thinking that's just the tip of the iceberg – that the physical problems are under-pinned by something deeper that can't be sorted by a skilful surgeon

and a good physio.

He's seen sports psychologists on a couple of occasions but hasn't felt the benefit. "I think the best thing you can get out of a scenario like that is self-realization from listening to yourself talking and realizing "I do like bikes, I'm not

scared, go twist the throttle'!

Self-belief and confidence – those are the two things of mine that have had a bit of a

two things of mine that have had a bit of a hammering since getting hurt, since getting dumped by CAS, since leaving Dixon Yamaha and going to ride for a new team.

"I'm not as wanted a commodity as I was so people don't think I'm as good as I was. Results get everything, that's the bottom line – you get the results you get everything else. To me this season is about speed and confidence – those are the two things I've got to regain. You never lose the speed but if you lose the confidence you're not going to get the best out of yourself."

And you can't argue with the fact that when he had that GP-winning confidence he was a

very fast man indeed. All the evidence you need can be found in a brief history of Gordon's career that goes a bit like this...

After a tough opening season with Harry Ainsworth's CAS Honda team in '98 when he struggled to qualify at GPs he improved to 13th in the world the following year and turned down a number of factory offers to stay with CAS for Y2K.

Y2K.
The new millennium saw Gordon establish
The new millennium saw Gordon establish himself as a world-class racer with two GP wins and his first British crown and it got even better in '01 with another couple of GP wins, third in the world behind Mickael Pichon and Chad Reed and a successful defence of his British title.



An unhappy year on a factory KTM followed in '02 before he returned to CAS and, despite a number of injuries, regained his British title and took three GP podiums in the new MXGP division, racing against the likes of Stefan Everts and Joel Smets as well as his old 250cc rivals. And then it all went completely tits-up.

A nightmare knee injury at the opening round of the '04 British championship effectively ended his season before it started and although he came back to race the final two GPs of the year he was out of favour with CAS who kept their hands on the British title and tasted world championship success anyway thanks to Josh Coppins.

All of which bring us nicely up to February '05 when our last interview left off with

Crockard all decked-out in Dixon colours with Stefan Everts' '04 engines and a chance to re-establish himself on the domestic and world scene. Something obviously went wrong - so what was it?

According to the MX rumour mill the answer's obvious. He's demotivated. He doesn't train hard enough. He parties too much. He's washed up. He's burnt out. The trouble with rumours is that if enough people hear them the line between fact and fiction gets blurred - we wanted to give Gordon the chance to tell his side of the story. So what happened Gordy?

"I wanted to sort things out after my '04 season – I had to make a change because of the fall out with CAS. I wanted to stay with a British team, I wanted to get quality bikes. I was pushing really hard to get in with Rinaldi in '04 once I realised the CAS thing had gone to pot. We made advances to Rinaldi's team and basically it came down to a choice between me and Brian Jorgensen and he chose Jorgensen which was totally justified by the way Jorgensen was riding.

"We did a bit of a deal with Michele Rinaldi to get Everts' '04 engines but he had to put them into a team somewhere so obviously the place to put them was the Dixon team as Rinaldi trusts Steve Dixon and has a good relationship with him. Rinaldi's very worried about the engines getting out and people seeing them and getting all his ideas because they're vastly different to a standard engine.

"So that's the direction I went. I wasn't really



FACTORY KTM

What went wrong?

From '99 to '01 Gordy's progression up the world rankings was smooth and swift with him advancing from 13th to sixth to third. But in '02 he left CAS Honda, signed a factory deal to race the brand-new 250cc KTM two-stroke and slipped back to seventh. With hindsight does he regret making the move?

"No because while I was at CAS in '01 Nick Moores and Steve Brady were the guys who were making my bike. HRC were not supporting us. In '01 I was racing against Pichon who was factory Suzuki, Chad Reed who was factory Kawasaki and Bolley was thereabouts now and again on his Rinaldi Yamaha. I was racing against factory bikes and we were not a factory team.

"It used to anger me. Harry [Ainsworth] was always one to say we're the official factory team' but we were so not. We were getting bikes from Honda UK, Mooresy did his thing with the motors, we'd bolt on the Showa A kit suspension and away we'd go. It used to drive me mad. At certain tracks I used to be a contender for actually winning the races and at other tracks I'd just struggle so, so much and I used to think it was bound to have something to do with engine set-up but there was no technical input [from HRC].

"We used to go for how we thought we should do it and then just hope for the best. We were running the same set-up at a hard, sticky, tacky track as we were using at a loose, sandy track. It used to do my head in that we didn't have any technical advice

"Kurt Nicoll and Dobby were pushing really hard, they were like 'come to KTM, we won the world 125 championship when we committed to it and we did the same with the four-strokes and we now want to win the 250s'. They sold it to me. It was a bit of a gamble but I really thought it was going to work and I was really disappointed when it didn't. It was down to the machine the team was fantastic but basically the machine wasn't right. It never was right. If you look at the results from other riders who rode the bike - whether it be Dobby or Pit Beirer or Jeremy McGrath or Grant Langston, whoever got on it never did anything.

"I was at Beaucaire for a test and I was trying to explain that whenever I went round a corner and had to lean over, when I opened the throttle there was no power – the bike just went burrrrrr. The technician took hold of the twist grip, turned it full open and then turned it back a quarter and started rotating it saying 'this is where the power is, this is the power' and I laughed thinking 'you're a funny guy for an Austrian' and he sort of just looked at me and I realised he was serious. He was an engineer, he wasn't a motorbike rider, he didn't have a clue about how to ride a bike around a track.

So initially the problem was the power – way, way too much horsepower and very, very top-end, all big high-revving stuff and then once we got the engine going good it became apparent that the suspension was a bit of a thing.

Jamie had just been world 125cc champion and he was golden boy in the workshop. When he won the championship he bought all the mechanics Tag watches so Jamie was the man – and rightly so. So they were listening to Jamie. Jamie's bike was really different to mine at the beginning. I was saying totally the opposite of what Jamie was saying and KTM were doing both but it was easier for them to do what Jamie was asking for. Jamie just wanted more rev, more top-end, he wanted everything hard hitting and that's quite easy to do on a bike. I wanted a strong bottom-end – a big, docile easy-to-ride bike, that's what I was looking for and we couldn't get it. 'It was such a shame with the KTM thing because the team

was great – the only thing that was wrong was the bike. It was a total disaster and I lost heart."

jumping with joy, I was more 'we'll have to see'. The main thing I was excited about was the bike with Everts' engine. Steve gave me the option of going with Kayaba or going with Ohlins. We did a test with Ohlins at St Jean D'Angely at the end of '04 testing against stock Kayaba stuff and I decided to go the Ohlins route. I then took a break so December I didn't ride and January I didn't ride and Steve had the bike all sorted for me - the race bike was sitting there in the garage at the beginning of February

"I went to the first race and all of a sudden I realised I was struggling with a few things. I wasn't on the race pace at all and I hurt my ankle at Hawkstone [the pre-season international in early March] at the end of the first race and that sort of threw me a wee bit.

I'd stayed at home practising the whole of February and planned on coming over in March and making real progress with Steve and the team. I wanted to work with them and I was going to go down and live with them and we were going to go practising and testing because it was now March and the weather was a bit better. Me getting hurt meant we didn't get to do

a lot of testing – we stayed stagnant.

"And then I rode at Zolder and was 12th or something but I really, really struggled with being confident on the bike. We were making big changes - dramatic, radical changes - with the suspension all the time and I never really felt I was getting to somewhere where I was happy. And then I started to doubt myself because I had fear when I was riding the bike.

"I was actually thinking 'am I scared riding this bike because I got hurt last year and I didn't race last year? Am I scared riding this bike because this is it, make or break, the last chance saloon - if I don't do something this year people will just write me off?' So I was riding very tense and not enjoying it. I had a fear of failure. But the general feel from riding the bike wasn't good. I didn't like the messages and feedback I was getting through the handlebars. It scared me. The bike was very, very fast and because of whatever way we set the bike up - and I'm not blaming Ohlins solely because I could be at fault as well - and whatever way we all worked together we didn't work together successfully.

"We didn't come up with a package that



meant I was producing results. When I crashed in Portugal it was probably due to riding tense and maybe a bit of misfortune – I hit a rock on the face of this jump in a rut and it just threw 🖟

me off the bike and I broke my wrist. "From that point on life got pretty hard. I came back to ride at the end of the year wearing a brace but my wrist was sore and didn't have good movement in it aware what happened to Mark Jones and struggled to do anything for the remainder o the season. I couldn't get the year over quick enough. And then everybody was giving me a hard time saying I wasn't motivated and didn't want to do it and was completely on my way to the job centre

"it got tough in that way so I really had to find myself at the end of it all and see what I wanted to do — did I want to forget about racing bikes or did I want to keep on it and get the things that were wrong fixed?"

So that's Gordy's '05 season in his own words. What went on on the track and what went on in his mind. Obviously, in the end he decided that he most certainly did want to keep on racing and sort out the things that were wrong, starting with his bike.

wrong, starting with his bike.
"I thought 'right, I need to get back on a
Honda' so I spoke to RWJ. Now RWJ are a long established team and have had world champions and British champions and I kinda fell as though I was going to become a cog in

their wheel. They we been up and running for so long they're going to have their own systems, their own ways. And it was a wee bit intimidating not knowing anybody there and I felt couldn't afford to take the risk of going into something that maybe wasn't going to

"Roger Magee from Wulfsport Honda was pushing hard as well. He wanted to progress his team and it was a new team so he didn't have any set ways, there was no history, no standards that had to be reached, it was just a fresh new team that was so full of enthusiasm. I could go and get my own mechanic and he didn't have particular sponsors so I could say those are the best handlebars, those are the

CAS HONDA What went wrong?

When Gordy first started to make waves in '98 his strongest supporter was CAS Honda boss Harry Ainsworth who more or less built the team around his teenage star.

"Harry used to give me so much confidence because he displayed great belief in me and that made me feel good but once he sort of gave up on me I was like 'he thinks I'm finished'. Harry used to say he was my number one fan and he was, so many times he gave me a second chance. When I first started with him I was crap and my head was in totally the wrong place —I was doing nothing and my attitude stank — and he still wanted to keep at it. And after the KTM thing he gave me another chance and he took me on again in '04.

"I think Harry lost belief in me. I think he decided that I didn't train enough or didn't work hard enough to get over my injuries. After KTM our relationship got stronger. When I went back in '03 we were on the four-strokes and I was on

in '03' we were on the four-strokes and I was on the pace. I won the British championship easily and was running at the front at grands prix. But I got hurt three or four times that year which made the GP thing hard. 'Harry always listened to what I was saying and believed in what I was saying. At the end of the year I wanted to work with Nick Moores again so Harry sorted that. It was just such a shame I got hurt at the start of '04 when I smacked my knee at Canada Heights, that really wrecked everything that I had going for me. 'After that I think Harry was sickened. I don't

"After that I think Harry was sicken know if he was listening to other people around him but he definitely seemed to be pulled in a different direction. I had a long-standing relationship with Red Bull and I was watching the TV and saw SoBe sponsorship all over the team. Harry did all that without even asking me. When I say I think that's him driven by other people I'm thinking Neil Prince and his wife Michelle because I think the SoBe thing was their little baby and to be quite honest I don't think they gave a damn whether it affected

me at all.

I suffered greatly from what they did with the SoBe thing, It wasn't so much what I lost financially or anything like that but put it into perspective – there's me sitting at home with a sore knee and I'm seeing the team I ride for with a new sponsor that's a direct conflict with me and my Red Bull thing. It was the fact that no one had even ralled me and said is it doing no-one had even called me and said is it going nd-one had even called me and said is it going to bother you, do you have a problem with that, can you get round it with Red Bull?' and from there on communication broke down greatly. 'Actions speak louder than words and Harry's actions were basically that he'd washed his hands of me and didn't want me and it was such a kick in the teeth. I still thought I could do something all I'd done was but my knee do something, all I'd done was hurt my knee but it then turned into this other thing and it just sapped me so much of energy it was unbelievable.







best tyres, these are the people I think are the through the week to make the weekends work best and we should target them as sponsors and make the bike up that way'. And I think it

has worked out because I'm really enjoying riding the bike. "At times it feels similar to the early days of CAS but I didn't know anything in those days mistakes...and we made quite a few - so it is

and neither did CAS - we just learned from our different in that way. I feel more like a veteran now because I've been there, done that. I'm 27 years old, when I joined CAS I would've been 19.

"There's stuff that I know now and at the beginning with CAS I didn't really know how to go racing properly. Now I know what to do

We've already established that a happy Gordon is a fast Gordon and although Lady Luck is still giving him the cold shoulder - a rock in the chops in Spain while lying sixth and a snapped chain when he was leading the second British championship moto at Landrake are just two recent examples - there are definitely signs that he's turning things around.

"I didn't enjoy racing last year and I didn't the year before when I came back from injury. This year I am enjoying it and it's actually fun again. My bike can win a grand prix, no problem. You don't need such a special bike, you need a bike that you enjoy riding and that you believe in and that you're not scared of - that's more important that what horsepower it has or some fancy suspension.

'Whenever you've won a grand prix or a British title that feeling is just something else and to try and get that again is very hard. I won't feel like that until maybe I'm on the podium at a grand prix or win a British championship round again. And I do think I can win a British championship round this year and I do think I can get on the podium at a GP.

And when he says that there's a steely conviction and resolve about him that makes you think it's coming from a man who, bit by hard-fought bit, is rediscovering his old self-belief and confidence...





YEE-HAM

The Erzberg Rodeo celebrated its 12th birthday this year and DBR joined the likes of David Knight, Travis Pastrana and Jeremy McGrath in Austria to find out more about the crazy event

Words and photos by Jonty Edmunds

The Erzberg Rodeo is without doubt one of the world's most unique off-road motorcycle events. Run over four days it attracts arguably the weirdest mix of global motorcycling stars and adventurous amateurs imaginable.

World enduro champion and reigning Erzberg Hare Scramble winner David Knight heads a huge field that includes WEC stars Giovanni Sala and Bartosz Oblucki, former Dakar winner Cyril Despres, freestylers Matt Rebeaud and Ronnie Renner, world champion stunt rider Chris Pfeiffer and trials rider Graham Jarvis. And on top of that, two of the State's biggest names – Travis Pastrana and Jeremy

McGrath – also come out to play this year.
With over 1000 riders from close to 20
different countries taking up the challenge of scaling the iron mountain, racing at Erzberg is something that has universal appeal. But only a few are serious about a podium finish – for the majority of competitors simply taking part is what the event is all about. Finishing the Red Bull Hare Scramble race is an achievement in itself.

But the Erzberg Rodeo is actually split into two events – a multi-cylinder class race which takes place at the beginning of the four-day extravaganza and the prized Red Bull Hare Scramble event which brings the festivities to a close. As well as that numerous other 'activities' take place with most ending in the huge beer tent situated at the base of the mountain.

Getting the event under way is the multi-cylinder class. Bringing together relics from the past, home-made specials and money-can't-buy factory rocket ships, the eclectic mix of machinery is as diverse as the talents of the competitors riding the bikes. For both KTM and BMW winning brings serious promotional bragging rights. For the riders two sprints up gravel tracks from the base to the top the Erzberg Mountain determine the winner.

With KTM enlisting the talents of David Knight, Giovanni Sala and Cyril Despres, BMW wade in with their three top riders Simo Kirssi, Jimmy Lewis and Chris Pfeiffer. Although a not-so-serious race designed to allow those with multi-cylinder bikes to compete against one another, KTM and BMW are only interested in

one thing – winning.

Proving just how versatile a rider he is, David
Knight claims victory in the twin-cylinder class competing in the race for the first time ever. Receiving a well deserved pat on the back from KTM upper management for his efforts, Knighter – having accepted the new challenge of racing the twin – is visibly focused on showing that he's as talented at high speeds as he is at enduro pace. For the majority of the rest of the 115 competitors the race offers the chance to reach speeds off-road that only those entered into the Dakar normally manage.

Finishing a full two seconds ahead of BMW-mounted Finn Simo Kirssi, Knighter ther sets his sights on defending his Red Bull Hare Scramble title. But before he can do so he, like 500 other riders, has to qualify for the event.

Returning to the same uphill, gravel-based

course used for the twin-cylinder race, well over 1000 riders attack the mountain over the









Graham Jarvis has an awesome ride for fourth at his first attempt

course of two days with each rider's fastest run being counted. The top 500 fastest riders then make it through to the start of the hare scramble event.

The two prologue runs attract some of the most colourful, entertaining and downright crazy riders ever to throw a leg over a motorcycle. All housed together on one of the massive shelves dug into the side of the mountain, entering the amateur riders' paddock is something you don't do without reason or inoculation. With most consuming more alcohol during the four days that there their vans use diesel getting to Erzberg, taking the racing seriously isn't too high up on most riders' list of priorities.

But for a handful of riders taking the event seriously is a priority. With Knighter favourite to win, less than half-a-dozen riders are serious about finishing on the podium while most dream of finishing and the majority simply want to beat their mates.

To complete the Red Bull Hare Scramble event each rider basically has to work his way from the bottom of the Erzberg quarry to the top, back down the rear of the mountain before looping around the side of it to the finish back at the base. With countless steep climbs and descents, rock sections, rut littered forests and at times blinding rain the course again sees a tiny percentage of the starters finish.

The race itself is over more or less as soon as it starts. Knighter, after an uncharacteristic early mistake, quickly gets himself back

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into the lead and then clears off leaving the majority of the competitors struggling to scale the numerous steep climbs unique to the race. Behind him riders litter the track while Pastrana tucks into second.

With riders getting lost, stuck and lost and stuck, Knighter marches towards a convincing race win while Travis drops backwards and Despres, Britain's Graham Jarvis and Austrian Andreas Lettenbichler battle it out for the podium positions.

With constant rain falling during the one-lap race Knighter finishes nine minutes ahead of Lettenbichler with Despres third and Jarvis an impressive fourth at his first visit to Erzberg. Making it three Brit finishers from three Brit starters, Justin Wilson comes home 16th and as the best Honda rider. Yes, he beat Jeremy





McGrath! In total 39 riders finish within the allotted four-hour time allowance with Pastrana coming home in 11th.

Finishing as the first US rider home puts a huge smile on Pastrana's face and the back-flip king is full of praise for event winner David Knight. "Knighter is a moto god," comments Pastrana. "Cyril Despres blew my mind the first time I saw him ride but David is really special.

"As big as he is and as much as he throws his bike around he is such an unbelievably good rider on the technical sections. It's an honour to be able to say that I raced against him. I was on the racing line on a slick upfill this year and he came right past me on the rocks as if I was sitting still. It's so frustrating how good he is but I have a lot of respect for him."



Fastest of the famous family of motocrossers from the Baltic State, Tanel Leok has emerged this season as one of the main challengers to Stefan Everts' supremacy

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson

TANEL LEOK is no stranger to UK fans after racing for Motovision back in 2004 but the baker's son from Estonia, 21 earlier this month, is now a regular visitor to the podium on the world stage too.

In his second year on the De Groot Kawasaki the two-time youth world champion has emerged as Stefan Everts' closest adversary. "I have been working much harder than ever before and it is paying off. I eat correctly now, train harder and I am better prepared with the bike than ever before.

"I had a reputation as a crasher but I don't think I deserved that reputation. I only ever had one really big crash, back in 2002 when I damaged my knee and was out for two months. For sure I used to have a wild style but I didn't crash so often. Perhaps it just looked like I was



going to. I don't think I have lost any of the aggression but I can channel it more effectively. You know Ricky Carmichael is wild but he is

always going forward, flowing."

Other factors have made the difference this year. "I wasn't really eating wrong but I was not being careful enough. It's so easy to grab a bar of chocolate after the race and not to eat at the right times. Now I make sure I eat three good meals a day at the right times, no snacks between meals and after about six in the evening I just drink water.

"At Bellpuig I gave everything and was finished physically at the end of the second race but I had kept pushing right up to the second last lap and only Stefan could do that before. When he got away mid-moto I was not on the absolute limit because I saw him edging clear and I didn't want to start making mistakes and lose it all. I knew he was gone but I wanted to keep my own race going, riding consistent lap times. That is the way you have to ride a 450 and it was good preparation for the rest of the GPs.

The Kawasaki challenge in MX1 was on course from the word go this year. "You need time on any new bike. The ideal situation is to get the bike how you want it during the winter because the GPs are hard enough anyway and spending a couple of days testing every week

during the season wears you down.

"Last year I hardly got to ride before the GPs. The bikes arrived very late to start with, just one week before the first GP. And Jan said he needed to work on the bikes before we raced them so I had to start the season

on a two-stroke.

"I finally got the four-stroke for Spain but I twisted my knee in qualifying and couldn't ride for two weeks. And even when I got back it was such a new project that there were times we were short of parts and I couldn't ride at all. Then we would get new parts and we had to test two days a week.

"I just wasn't spending enough of the right time on the bike, I didn't feel comfortable and it took me half the season to get on the pace. From Sweden, where I got my first pole, the season took off. We had caught up by then and I could start to do my own race.

"This year I have been able to do it right. I got my testing out of the way during the winter and I can save my energy for racing the bike at weekends rather than testing all week.





I can go out and do my own thing, preparing myself for the next race, not spending two laps trying one thing and two laps something else. I spent a whole month in Spain in the spring and I can do my 35 minute plus two motos whenever I want to."

It has been a long, tough road to the top for the boy whose homeland was still a Soviet province when he was born. Nephew of Avo so tragically paralysed last year – and cousin of Aigar and Martin, Tanel is the first full factory rider in the Leok dynasty and was already a two-time world champion by the age of 16.

In Y2K he won the 80cc world title from Sebastien Pourcel and Swede Marcus Norlen at Gaildorf with a certain James Stewart left trailing in their muddy wake and a year later added the 125 junior world crown.

Introduced to western racing by German dealer Bodo Schmidt, who was backing uncle Avo at the time, Tanel became one-third of Tinus Nel's infamous brat pack team at Vangani in 2002. The other two kids? Ben Townley and Tyla Rattray!

"Estonia is not exactly in the centre of Europe and there are not so many people who want to sponsor motocross in Estonia. The first year with Bodo I still had to go to school back home and stayed with Avo when I was here. Then with Vangani I moved to Belgium. But I learnt to grow up fast. I was still only 16 but I had to learn to live on my own and I got to see something of the outside world. That was a sharp learning process.

'Vangani was still quite a small team but we had a great time. And with Ben and Tyla my English came on in leaps and bounds you only learn by speaking a language. Tinus still helps me a lot, he still looks after me as personal manager and hardly charges me anything.

Few realise how hard the South African entrepreneur had to fight for Tanel at the end of 2002 as the team took on the role of official KTM junior team and Mattighofen didn't want to keep the Estonian.

"It was really difficult back then with only one moto. There was no second chance and the slightest problem - a bad start, a collision, something with the bike, anything - could wreck the entire GP. And then there was the

But Tanel gave Tinus the ammunition he needed to keep the boy on at the final round in Russia when he rode an inspirational race from last to sixth!

'But '03 was much better and I had a lot of deals on offer for the 125 GPs the next year but I wanted to switch to the big class. You need a very good bike to achieve anything at all in MX2 but in MX1 you have to be the man to hold on, any bike has power enough!

"I rode the 250 two-stroke at the Nations in 2003 at Zolder and in qualifying I was only half-a-second off Carmichael. That clinched it, giving me the confidence that I was better off in the big class even though I was still a teenager.'









Already in the second year of MX1 the two-strokes were almost dead but Tanel flew the flag for half-a-season.

"I had a bit of a disadvantage against the four-strokes but I also got a lot of attention when I started getting results. It was kinda like me against the rest but the Motovision team was right behind me and helped me relax.

By early June Smets was out and Suzuki offered the use of the factory four-stroke. "At first I found it harder to ride the four-stroke and my results went backwards a little for a few races. But once I had got used to it, it was actually an easier bike to ride and within a month or so I was right back where I had been on the two-stroke, pushing the podium. I kept riding in the Motovision shirt but Luka was preparing the bike in the factory awning. And the starts were much better, I didn't have to push so much in the early laps."

And the door was opened for Tanel to move to Kawasaki as sole runner on the MX1 bike.

"Jan had already started talking to me when I was riding the two-stroke about the possibility of joining his team. I had other offers too but I could see that Jan runs a relaxed team. It's not only Jan. My mechanic Rille gets the work done but he is really laidback and that helps me stay cool too.'

Having a MX1 team-mate also suits Tanel. "It is nicer that there are two of us this year. I get on well with Stephen and we went testing together already in Japan. Each of us found what we felt we liked but we also got the chance to ride each other's bike and I think that helped both of us to find the best solution.

Of course both of us want to beat each other simply because we both want to win and second is second, even to your team-mate. But Jan treats all of his riders equally, there is no

number one rider and number two rider. The bike this year is consistently good in the start and the confidence I have been able to develop in the bike means that I am starting from a good place on the gate.

"I felt already before this year that I had it in me to ride that consistent race if I got a good start but that had been missing. The start makes such a difference - when you are fit, your bike is working how you want and you get out of the gate it is all so much easier.

"I hope I can keep it going and finish the year in the top three of the series with consistent results every race, no mistakes, no DNFs and on the podium as often as possible. I have had third at Zolder, second in Spain and a win would be nice sometime during the year.'

And when does Tanel think he can be world champion for the third time?

'Soon, I hope!'

STEFAN SAYS

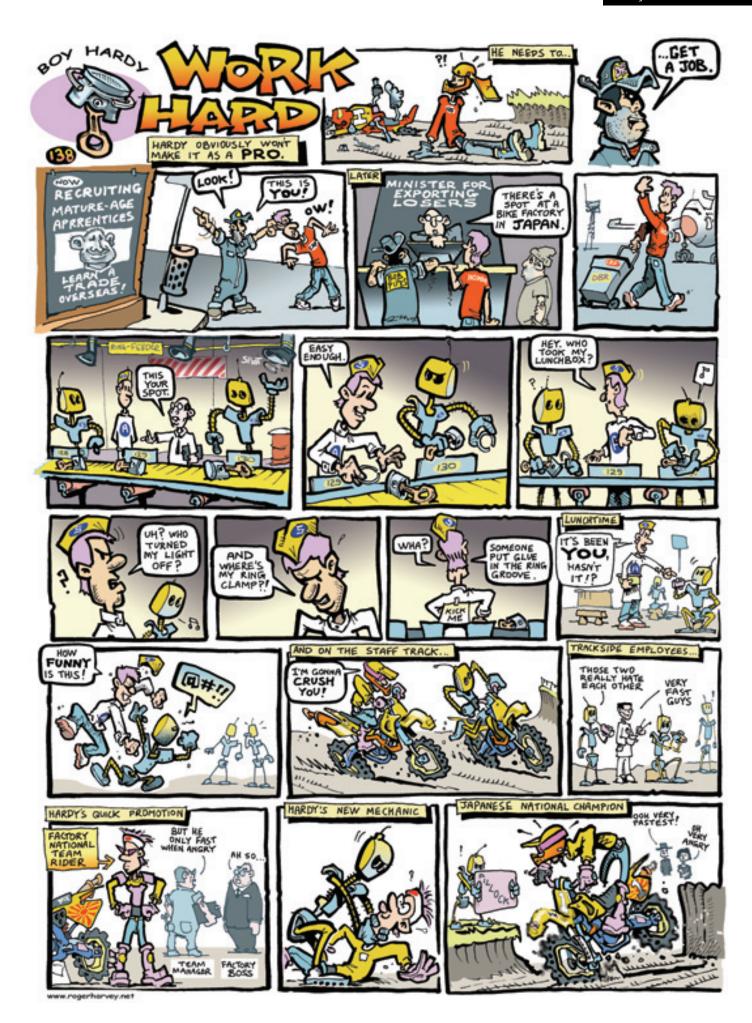
Everts on Leok

"I have been impressed by Tanel this year. He has been consistent and that is new for him. He was already on the podium at Zolder and then in Spain he made two good starts and, especially in the second moto, he tried all the race. He never gave up even when I increased the pace at 20 minutes he was still going for it. "Normally when I do that at 20 minutes they give up and the fact that Tanel didn't do so was particularly impressive. I kept pushing and I could gain a second each lap but I got stuck at 10 seconds. It's good to have a young kid making good results, good for his confidence and for the future of the sport."





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There's no bigger arse-clencher than banging on your brakes only to find 'em fading faster than Sutty halfway through a 10-minute moto. Here's how to avoid it...

Words by Geoff Walker Photos by Ray Chuss

BRAKES ARE the greatest enemy of speed and a part of your bike which you can't afford to have go wrong. Regular pad changes and system bleeding with a quality brake fluid will keep things working properly and stopping you smoothly.

Friction from braking causes heat and heat causes degradation of fluid. Your brakes get a serious pounding when you're reeling off the laps in the heat of our long, hot summer... Well, maybe it's not that hot or indeed long but you know what I mean!

Replacing your brake pads and bleeding the system is a really simple process. Follow these simple steps and your brakes will feel factory in no time.

Tech tip Sparkly spindles

As soon as you remove your rear spindle – no matter what the situation – immediately take it and clean it. I clean the old crud off and place the spindle in the vice before lightly oiling it and giving it a good clean with Scotchbrite. Then I lightly grease it and clean all the other parts and fitment areas.









pic:01 Make sure your bike is clean in the areas you'll be working on then whip the rear wheel out.

pic:02 Use a flat blade screwdriver and gently prize the pads apart. This allows room for the new pads to be fitted as the piston is eased back into the caliper body.

pic:03 The brake pin can now be removed. Some bikes have an 8mm head and some have a 5mm allen head. With the allen head make sure you have a good fitting allen key as an ill-fitting one will round the contact points off causing you an absolute headache. If the pin doesn't come loose with a little force then heat pic:06 If the brake pin is badly worn you must

the area a little with a heatgun. This will expand the caliper body allowing the pin to be loosened a little easier.

pic:04 Whip the pads out. If the pads have separate heat shields on the backsides - like on the Hondas - keep these and refit them on your new pads if you are going to use aftermarket pads.

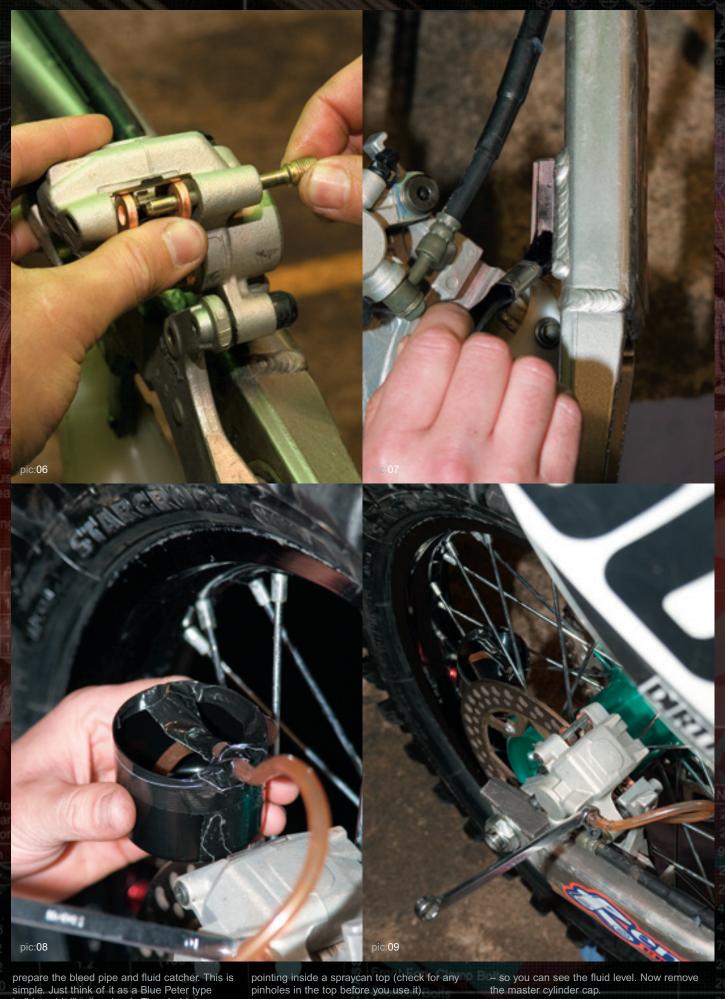
pic:05 Use a soft cloth and maybe some brake cleaner to clean the area. Try to get all the crud away from the area as it can pit the piston and cause a failure.

replace it as the damage to the pin will cause the pads to wear on an uneven plane. Apply a very small amount of copper slip grease to the pin and fit your new pads into place making sure all the locating parts are in place. You should have to apply a little upward pressure to the new pads to fit the pin into place as there is a sprung steel holder which keeps the pads solidly in place.

pic:07 Slide the caliper off its locating runner on the swingarm. Clean and lightly grease this area and slip the caliper back into place.

pic:08 Okay, that's the pad fitment done. Slip the wheel back into place. Now you





prepare the bleed pipe and fluid catcher. This is simple. Just think of it as a Blue Peter type build – a bit like the classic Thunderbirds headquarters made from papier-mache and old bog roll tubes... Take a piece of see-through carb breather pipe and duct tape it into place

pic:09 Place a ring spanner on the bleed nipple before you attach the pipe into place. The fluid catcher can be put into the spokes – facing up

pic:10 The old fluid must be pumped through the system. Pump the brake pedal and hold the pedal down as you crack the nipple open to



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allow the oil to flow into the pipe. Close the nipple and repeat until the oil is at the bottom of the master cylinder.

pic:11 New fluid should be added at this stage and the pumping and cracking process must be repeated until the fluid coming into the clear pipe is clean and fresh. Make sure you do not allow the fluid level to drop below the bottom of the master cylinder as this will draw air into the system. If there is air in the system it will not work.

pic:12 When the fluid is all replaced and the brake has a good feel, disconnect the pipe and replace the master cylinder cap – making sure the fluid level is correct. Make sure your discs are clean and that you give the new pads a lap or two to bed in first time out.



Walker's Big Banger!

This month's cunning top tech tip comes from Dave in Worcestershire who's got a good way of keeping his cables and throttle-housing crud free when power washing his bike.

"Everyone washes their bike with a power washer these days (some less often than others eh Wakker? – Sutty) and although the high pressure water does a great job of getting rid of all the soil, sand and stains you pick up in a day's riding they're also good at blasting dirt and water into seals, cables and your throttle housing.

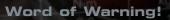
"So what I do is I cover my throttle assembly with a plastic bag – sometimes it's from Tesco or ASDA or I use a Marks and Spencer one if I'm feeling decadent. That way it's impossible to blast dirt and debris into your housing. Oh and in case your wondering I don't just leave my throttle dirty – I simply sponge the throttle area down then rinse with a low pressure hose."

Thanks for sharing that tip Dave – it's something I've been doing for years out on the GP trail. Plastic bags can easily be obtained from a local supermarket or corner shop or if you're stuck out in the countryside there's normally one stuck on a barbed wire fence next to a dog-eared copy of Razzle (or possibly Playboy if whoever left it there was feeling decadent).

For a chance to win a Big Bang Hour Meter of your very own email your top tech tips to geoffwalkerdbr@aol.com or post 'em to me at Big Bang Top Tech Tips, DBR, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancs LA4 4AG.

Failing that you can always buy one by giving Baseline a call on **01306 889911**.





It's a common sense thing...

I read the top tip which described how to weaken control levers so that they snap with enough left to carry on racing.

Years ago (when broken levers were much more common) I was riding my bike with the end of the lever snapped off and crashed, went over the bars and managed to impale my thigh on the broken lever. Stitches and about six weeks without riding was the end result but it could have been worse.

My concern is that the ball of the lever is there for a reason and riding without them is both dangerous to you and other riders and that at the very least the lever should be changed as soon as possible once broken.

I hope that this information is published to make other readers aware of this point.

Steve Cornwell. Essex

Hey Steve. Hope the battle scars have healed well. Thanks for your mail – a very valid point well made.









deserted him.

These two negatives are not unrelated. If you don't get the gate you don't get a clear track, if you don't get a clear track you have to make passes and if you have to make passes then you're more likely to end up on your arse.

"What can I say? Luck has not been on my side so far this year! It's not like I did not know what to expect. I always knew it was going to be tough, especially with missing time on the bike before the season but my wrist is finally okay now.

"Rattray, De Reuver and Pourcel are all very fast but it's not like I suddenly lost my speed! It's going better and better. I won convincingly in Spain and Portugal so the championship is still wide open. I'm 47 points behind and [laughing] I'm not panicking yet. I really want to prove I can do it again.

"For me the biggest thing will be to stay calm at the beginning of the race after a bad start, I need to be patient because I was on the ground so easy the first GPs. In Teutschenthal I had one of the biggest crashes in my career. I sort of overjumped in a downhill and it was a very fast crash - luckily I didn't get injured but I have to say that it was scary."

The Sicilian knows the importance of finding his form off the start as he explained to DBR's GP correspondent Alex Hodgkinson last month. "The '06 Yam is a better bike all round but we have not yet got it as good out of the gate. It is something we must work on."

After only qualifying twice in two seasons and failing to score world championship





points it was his awesome holeshots in '04 that first made the MX world sit up and take notice of Cairoli. In fact, betting on Cairoli's iconic 222 number plate to round the first corner in a leading position almost seemed risk free.

"The secret of my holeshots?" he smiles, "there is no secret. Even in 80cc I was a good starter and it's not just weight. Compared to 2004 I'm 10 kilos heavier now! I'm fully-grown and I gained a lot of muscles. It's just down to reactions and maybe the fact that I realize how important it is. You save so much energy and you can immediately start pushing if you're in front. It's a huge advantage."

And Cairoli's going to need every advantage he can find if he's to reel in Rattray - but the Sicilian's got a track record of digging deep when it really counts.

island of Sicily is hardly a hotbed of motocross and that Antonio faced any number of hurdles both cultural and financial - to reach the top. "For me it was a big thing to win outside of Sicily. When I first raced around Milan a lot of riders were very disrespectful and they were laughing at me. That made me even more determined to prove them wrong. It was a good satisfaction to beat them! That was also the time I made my mind up that I wanted to become a professional motocross rider, although my parents did not have the means."

Even his title-winning campaign was hardly plain sailing. Leading the series by 14 points going into the seventh round of the series at Matchams, Cairoli DNFed the opening moto and injured his hand after fellow Italian Davide Guarneri jumped across his path. A gutsy ride for 13th in race two salvaged some points but he lost the red plate to Andrew McFarlane who overturned a 32-point deficit to lead the series by seven.

The following round in Italy saw Cairoli regain the red plate but then it all went off in France when he lost his temper during the qualifying race. Guarneri ran into him and Cairoli retaliated by kicking his opponent. The powers-that-be retaliated by disqualifying him.
"I'm not proud of what I did that day," says

Cairoli, "but I had been having problems with

Guarneri even since we were in 80cc together. Before France we already had a few collisions and it's him I owe my thumb injury from England to. When he ran into me in Saint-Jean D'Angely it was just too much, I couldn't contain myself anymore. Luckily things are normal between us now.

The loss of a potential 50 points forced Antonio to get his head down and train harder than ever to make up for the points he had lost.
Team manager Claudio De Carli saw this up close. "Antonio was frustrated

because of his disqualification and he wanted to win everything from that point on. He wanted to show who was the real leader in MX2

On his return Cairoli won the Swedish GP, claiming both heats, came third in South Africa and scored three wins in a row to put him in pole position for the title against the Yamaha-mounted duo McFarlane and Chiodi.

njury – to wrap up the MX2 crown. But can ne dig deep and retain his title? Antonio is

still optimistic...
"I have to keep on working now, fortunately the team understands my situation and they have been very supportive. The bike is constantly moving forward as well. The new frame and suspension are not yet performing." like I want but we constantly try new pieces and it's getting better all the time. It's just a shame that I have to do all the development work myself because Matteo [Bonini] is injured. That's certainly a disadvantage compared to the KTM boys.

"Of course there's more pressure if you have the number one plate. That's not only negative because then you need to push even harder. I like competition - to me motocross is about the battle with other riders. That's the real adrenalin rush. This year will be different because Rattray was injured most of last year, the Pourcel brothers will be better...that's why I have to keep on improving physically and technically. I also made small adjustments to my riding style, to consume less energy. I will be riding a bit more like Stefan I guess!

"At the end of last season I said I wanted to



Even a mechanical failure on the Isle of Wight

couldn't distress the Italian youngster.
"Normally it's the manager who has to comfort his rider when something goes wrong," recalls De Carli, "but it was Tony himself who assured everybody in the team that it would be okay – 'we will beat them anyway' he kept

on saying."

Full credit to his self-confidence and focus,
Cairoli battled on in Lierop — despite a wrist

be around two seconds faster in qualifying. For the moment I'm very close to my goal on hard tracks.

In the sand I don't feel completely at ease yet, I think I can do a lot better there. In the end you can only give it your best and if doesn't work out...you focus on the next race and try to make it better. I'm never angry or frustrated after a bad race because it doesn't help you. I go dancing and try to have fun."

HOME HERO

Sicilian star goes national

Cairoli's '05 title didn't go unnoticed and he made waves in the mainstream media in Italy, appearing on the national TV station RAI and receiving a full page in the famous Gazetta dello Sport.

Antonio is also a celebrity in Sicily, where a huge celebration party was organized in his hometown. "Being a sporting celebrity in Sicily is not that hard," Cairoli smiles, "it's a small island and there are not many world champions in any sport! Although I hope that I can make motocross more popular in Sicily and Italy. Also there's a new generation of strong Italian riders ready with me – Philippaerts, Guarneri and Bonini. Motocross will never be so big as MotoGP but I think a lot of people would like our sport if they got to know it better.

Cairoli actually puts his money where his mouth is and supports local racing. This winter he started his own Siculo Sugno (dialect for 'I am Sicilian') team, helping out three young riders who race on YZ85s. His 11-year old cousin Jeremy Palazzolo seems especially talented but Antonio himself has many dreams left before he turns team manager full time. "I want to be the most successful Italian motocross rider of all time so I have to beat Chiodi's three world titles! Eventually I would like to go to America to succeed in supercross. I really like supercross and I have my own practice track at home. However, I'm still focused on the GPs in Europe now. I don't know when I will go to America but I will only go when I'm 100 per cent ready. If I go I want to win.











earn enough to get by, to run myself and to run mv van.

Mark readily admits that he had a lucky break in having Mike Church for an uncle. "My dad got to expert in the AMCA and my parents supported me all they could but they couldn't afford to put me through the ranks. Without a shadow of a doubt it was Mike and Paula Church who made it possible financially for me through the schoolboys and early adult seasons which has enabled me to become a pro rider. And they took care of everything for TC, Swordy and me - I'd just turn up at the track, go racing and at the end of the day go home again without having to worry about anything."

But at 27 Mark has long since learned to stand on his own feet. "I've got some really good people helping me now but it is hard work to find them and, once you've found them, you've got to look after them to try to keep them for the next year.

"When they took the prize money out of GPs I sat down and worked out how much I was going to need to get to the races for a year and went out there to find it. If you go to a potential sponsor with everything written down they can see that you're genuine. I break it down for each race, like £500 for the ferry to go to Spain, £200 for tolls, £350 for fuel and ask how much they can help me out with.

"I don't try to pull the wool over anybody's eyes. It's no good running out of money in the middle of June and not being able to finish out the season. I try to get it all sorted for the year in January so that I don't have to concentrate on anything through the year except the racing.

"Some people only want to put their money

into the factory guys but there's probably 10 of them and they still need 20 of us to make a race so I think the whole sport owes something to the people who help the likes of me. And I'm glad to say our efforts to let people see who they are have already brought us another new sponsor in the Star Recruitment Agency, a job centre in Marshfield.'

Mark even calculated and put through a plan for transport. "I couldn't afford a Rimor or Kentucky two years back so I bought that little LT35, built it myself through the winter, used it last year and then sold it to help pay for the camper we're using now."

And the MotoXtreme link? "I've known Alan for ever. He's helped me out in some way since day one and he has always joked with me that he was going to take me on when I couldn't find anything else. I went round all of the teams at the end of last year but no-one wanted to take me seriously as being a GP rider again. Then I went round a lot of shops - not just Alan - and a lot of them showed interest until you start saying how much it will cost.

"But Alan Brown sat down with me, looked through what we needed and talked about where we could find this, where we could find that. That was the end of December. I go in the shop every day anyway and one day he said put it there, shake hands, let's have a go!"

And Mark has settled back to his Kawasaki roots. "I'm pleased generally with the way it's started. Lyng was not so good after I crashed but I got a fourth in the second race at Canada. Heights. I don't feel I'm that far off Swordy, James and De Dycker - I could see them every lap and I started closing back in at the end.

"I started off scoring in every one of the first four GP motos but then Lindhe wiped me out at the first turn in Portugal and in Germany I got pushed out at the first turn both times. But that all goes back to qualification, that's my biggest struggle and it leaves me with an outside gate so I'm nearly always starting way back and have to chase through. When I get a good start, like in Czecho last year, I can run with them and finish well up. At Loket I started fourth and finished eighth, in Spain the year before I started eighth and kept it all moto.

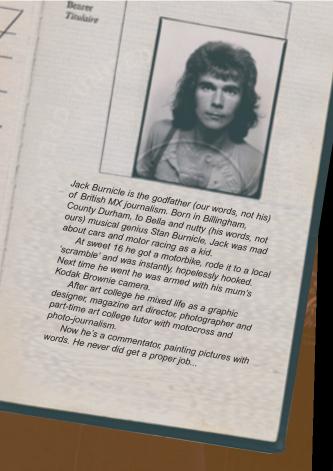
"I know I have the speed but if you don't start with them you're never going to catch them. If you're near the back you can lose 15 seconds in the space of three corners on the first lap.

"I want to try to finish the year in the top 15 in the GPs. It won't be easy but it's realistic if I can get among them with better starts, stay healthy and keep scoring. A few top-10s, 11ths, 12ths and I can make it.'

With MotoXtreme just around the corner, mechanic Max Hendry just a few miles away in Charfield and trainer Jerry Burgess 10 minutes down the road, it really is a West Country effort and that's just the way Mark likes it.

"We're a small but professional set-up and I don't know if I'd want to go factory now, even if someone offered it. I've been in big teams before and it's not always as rosy as what it looks. You can look in some of those awnings and it looks brilliant but when you're in there it's hard work and you've got to enjoy what you're doing too.

"If you're not waking up with a smile on your face you're in the wrong job!"



It was 30 years ago that Jack first savoured the delights of a continental GP – so it was also 30 years ago that a continental GP first savoured the delights of Jack's skimpy wardrobe...

Words and photos by Jack Burnicle

IT WAS one of the hottest summers in history and 1976 was also the year I enjoyed my first visit to a continental motocross grand prix.

Back then I worked four days a week at Galaxy Publications in Kilburn, NW6, as art director of Knave magazine. The fifth day took me out of London to Maidenhead as part-time tutor at Berkshire College of Art and Design.

Weekends, of course, were taken up with motocross. My humble Pentax cameras and I traversed the UK mixing British championship rounds and GPs with little local meetings and loving them all.

Roger Harvey had embarked on his first full 125 grand prix season for Husqvarna, often travelling alone in his Transit van and acting as his own mechanic, chauffeur and chef. We'd originally met in the late sixties at Post Hill outside Leeds.

"Why not come over to the French GP?" insisted Harv'. "It's only 40 miles from Calais and you can come back with us!"

I rang up 'Motor Cycle News' (DBR's sister newspaper TMX had not yet been invented!) who agreed to run pictures and a short story. True, I'd never written a race report before but what the beek

Having purchased a cross channel services leaflet from a local travel agent, I left Knave's studio on Friday afternoon and headed for Victoria Station, clad in t-shirt, skimpy shorts, yellow socks and a pair of girl's platform sandals (I'm at a loss to explain this!) and carrying my cameras and a sleeping bag.

The huge queue for tickets at Victoria bode badly. There was only one seat remaining when the couple in front of me reached the desk. They refused and I gratefully snapped it up.

Down to Dover and a stampede on to the ferry. Then a similar exodus by those in the know as we berthed in Calais, its famous town clock glowing through the first eerie hint

The train crammed with perspiring people, I

sought refuge with several other dudes in the first class compartment where we feigned ignorance when Inspector Clouseau arrived to check our tickets.

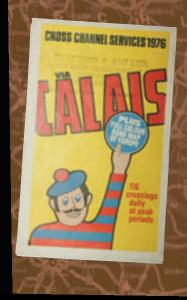
ete Mathia flew to 10th overall on his

Everyone else fell asleep – they were headed for Paris – but I had to stay awake and change trains at Hazebrouck where, in an empty, echoing station I was directed to an ancient tin cattle truck with particularly primitive toilets that emptied through a cold, draughty hole on to the track beneath. There was nobody else aboard

We clanked into Cassel and I stepped out into the exact same setting as Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid when they reached Bolivia. It was six o'clock in the morning. The sun burned down on a single, deserted platform. Flies buzzed gently around in the already suffocating heat. A lone, scruffy mongrel snuffled along the railway track towards me. What the hell did I do now?

Then I spotted an aged charabanc parked at







a distant level crossing and tottered over in some trepidation. A burly man with a moustache sat behind the wheel, scouring a French newspaper. "Excusez-moi, monsieur,"

A broken gearbox sidelined title candidate Jiri Churavy

I stammered through his open door. "Ou est le motocross?"

This was my initiation into how, unlike England, everybody in France knows about motocross. He exploded into startling action. "Ah, oui, monsieur, entrée, entrée!" he bellowed, beckoning me into the beast, firing up its bone-shaking diesel engine and rumbling off into the sultry warmth of another amazing summer's day.

Shouting and waving at old men in berets already out tending their gardens, Gerard Depardieu roared deafeningly up a steep, winding, wooded hill. Welling with eager apprehension, I clung on tight until suddenly at the summit we rumbled through a narrow street of tall, crooked buildings and burst into a wide, cobbled market square.

'Le patron' shuddered to a halt. "Motocross a gauche!" he thundered, gesticulating down a shaded side street beneath a stone arch. He asked for 75 centimes. Nonplussed, I gave him a franc (present day equivalent 10p!). He drove off beaming broadly and left behind the heavy sound of silence and birdsong.

I headed down the slope under the arch and emerged into a sumptuous green lane bordered by trees and verdant hedgerows. Two men were hanging brightly coloured bunting over a gateway into a field. "Bonjour." They looked bewildered. And there beneath me, right behind the main street and the 'Hotel de Ville', lay an awesome amphitheatre and, in the corner of a plush field, three vans and a car.

Grinning like an idiot, I walked down the hill, past more men hanging trackside banners and bunting, stopped outside Harv's Transit and laid on top of my sleeping bag. It was seven o'clock.

An hour later Roger's wife Lyn took a typical early morning leak. "Oh, 'ello Jack, when did

you get 'ere?" she asked, unsurprised, as if I lay there every morning. Her mother-in-law Eileen plus Roger's Rugeley pals Baz, Annie, Nat and Squiffy were all there (hence the Cortina!), as well as rivals Andy Ainsworth and Pete Mathia in the other vans. In those simple days, with scrutineering and free practice on Saturdays, many riders didn't show up before then. Hence the empty paddock.

Roger's mum kindly sewed a yellow photographer's pass on to my tiny yellow towelling bathing trunks and that was my garb for the weekend. Saturday evening we sat outside a bar in the market square, opposite the Hotel de Ville (which operated as race headquarters), where Andy and his wife Myra drank feisty amounts of red wine.

Race day dawned red hot. What an atmosphere! The valley filled with 30,000 fans, no course watering to speak of and billowing clouds of choking dust, pierced by searing sunshine.





BRIT FOLK HERDES (1. tor.) ROGER HARVEY, ANNY AMSHORTH +
PETE MATHIA AT THE RIDERS' PRESENTATION, FRENCH 125 FP,
COSSEL, JUNE 27th 1976!





This was the year reigning 125 world champion Gaston Rahier (Suzuki) took on reigning AMA national champ Marty Smith (Honda). Their first race duel was an epic until Marty's Honda snapped its chain, leaving Rahier to struggle home in sapping heat ahead of CZ duo Zdnek Velky and Yuri Khudiakov.

Andy Ainsworth (Suzuki), fuelled by his Saturday evening indulgence, finished a flying fifth behind another Russian, Pavel Rulev, while Harvey – off his customary hopeless start – surged all the way through to seventh ahead of loudly hailed local boy Rudi Potisek (if this name sounds familiar, his son Timotei won Le Touquet in February).

Tiny, moustachioed, fair-skinned Belgian Rahier collapsed from heat exhaustion as he crossed the line and was rushed to hospital. The paddock was strewn with naked, knackered bodies. Lyn poured pints of precious water over Harvey's head. But they somehow all, except Gaston, made it to the line for race two, Russian hardman Khudiakov courtesy of Nat Cole who welded up the CZ's broken exhaust pine!

exhaust pipe!
Blond Californian Smith led until his chain snapped again. Harv, second mid-race to Khudiakov (thanks Nat!), eventually lost out to bright-eyed little Czech Velky who stormed to the front from 26th place on lap one to hijack an heroic grand prix victory. Roger and Andy claimed third and fourth overall ahead of Potisek and Rulev, with 'Math' and his Italian Aspes seventh in race two. And Harv mounted the podium alongside Velky and Khudiadov to crown a brilliant weekend for the British.

Rahier still led the title chase after eight rounds, his nearest rival Jiri Churavy having suffered a broken CZ gearbox. Velky now lay third, a point in front of Smith, with Harvey fifth ahead of Khudiakov, Rulev, Dario Nani (Gilera) and Ainsworth!

That night the organising club hosted a reception in Cassel's town hall, trestle tables groaning under glasses full of a cloudy liquid I'd never seen before. Nor tasted. My introduction to the alluring, potent aniseed of Pernod meant my journey home, in Math's van amid a cheerful English convoy, passed in misty semi-oblivion – the perfect conclusion to my continental motocross baptism of sun-scorched bliss.

On Monday morning I was back behind my desk at Knave. Had it all been a hot, dusty dream? A shimmering sun tan said not!

AMA SX WRAP

Steve Cox is an American moto-journo who follows the entire AMA SX/MX tour. A staffer at famed US weekly Cycle News for over four years before striking out on his own to do the freelance thing, Steve's an ex-pro motocross racer so he can ride as well as write. He knows the sport and its personalities like few others and as our US Editor provides top-level insight and features fresh from the Stateside scene...

NAILEBITER

Three riders go into the final round of the AMA SX series with a chance of the title but only one man can win it and that man is Ricky Carmichael

WORDS and PHOTOS by Steve Cox

t's not uncommon for the winner of the AMA SX series to clinch it the week before the finale - or, at worst, need only to make the Main at the finale to clinch the title. This year, however, is different...

After 15 rounds of AMP'D Mobile/AMA SX action we have a tie for the series lead between four-time champ Ricky Carmichael of the Makita Suzuki team and 2004 champ Chad Reed of Team Yamaha.

Both riders have 316 points which normally means that whichever rider beats the other in Saturday night's supercross Main Event will be the 2006 champ and the other will have to settle for the runner-up spot. It should be noted that Carmichael has never lost a title defence and he is the defending champion.

But in this case if James Stewart wins whoever finishes second (between Reed and Carmichael) will get the title and whoever finishes third will finish third in the championship as he'll tie with Stewart and Stewart will win the tie-breaker based on his number of wins on the season. Still with me?

Stewart plans to do his part – which is to win the race – and he starts off on the right foot with the Main Event holeshot.

"I think we all feel pressure in racing," Stewart says "Stick a title on the line and it goes up a little bit but I was actually pretty good until I saw the 125 class and those guys were eating it everywhere. But I got the holeshot onight and then I just rode 20 good laps. It was good."

el gets around early second-place man Kevin Windham on lap two and chases Stewart valiantly as Reed comes through the pack. Reed has a run-in with Carmichael's team-mate Ivan Tedesco on his way through. "The only real problem I had was with Ivan a little bit but my team-mate would've done the same so no complaints there," Reed says.

Windham makes way for Reed so the Aussie has a clear track for the final 16 laps to try and catch Carmichael for the title. In the end he can't quite pull it

off, finishing three seconds behind RC who's just over four seconds behind Stewart at the finish.

"I felt like I rode a solid race tonight," Reed says.
"I tried to make passes early and get up there and just try to chase Ricky down. It was a tough track. It was really fast, slick and all I asked this weekend was just to go out there and ride the way I knew I could ride and not to leave anything on the table. anything on the table.

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SHOOTOUT!

Short wins as East and West go head-to-head

Since Y2K the Dave Coombs Snr 125cc East/West Shootout has only been won once by one of the newly crowned champions - in 2004 when James Stewart won the 125cc East and the Shootout.

So the odds seem to be stacked against last year's winner (and newly crowned 125cc East title holder) Davi Millsaps and 125cc West champ Grant Langston.

Then, while riding a small section of the track for the media on the Friday before the race, Langston went down and partially dislocated his right wrist. With him out, it leaves the job up to Millsaps.

Mike Alessi actually grabs the holeshot in the Main Event followed by his team-mate Jay Marmont and 2003 Shootout winner Andrew Short. Millsaps rounds the first lap in sixth.

By lap two Short's second to Alessi with Millsaps right on his tail and the two Honda team-mates go by the SX rookie on the following lap. For the next few laps Millsaps hounds Short for the lead but then Millsaps goes down.

"I wanted to race Millsaps," Short says. "We like to kid around in the truck and he's a jokester and he one-upped me by getting the title so he has bragging honours in the truck. I had to at least get some revenge and get some ammo on him before the outdoors started because he's going to be on the 450. It went good. I was just bummed that he went down. I wish I could've raced him straight up."

Alessi inherits second. "I just tried to ride behind them and follow their pace and they were going so fast," Alessi says. "I saw Millsaps go down and I saw my chance to get second."

Multi-race winner out east, Josh Grant soon begins to pressure Alessi and even gets past only to have Alessi stuff his way back by. Grant then goes down trying to block Alessi's line a couple of turns later.

"I don't know what Josh Grant was doing," Alessi says. "He got by me and then I just came up the inside – we didn't even touch or anything - and two corners later he jumped right in front of me and tried to take me out and went right off the track. I don't know what he was thinking there."

After Grant falls it hands third to his team-mate Tommy Hahn who holds the spot to the finish.

So Short takes his second Shootout win. "It doesn't solve last weekend," Short says of the weekend he lost the 125cc Western title. "I was definitely bummed. I wouldn't be normal if I wasn't bummed but I've got to move on and tonight was great to get a win. I was pretty excited. I didn't really expect it. I wasn't riding that good in the heat race and I wasn't putting myself in the right position at the right time but I'm pumped."

RESULTS **East/West Shootout**

Andrew Short

Tommy Hahn

Josh Grant

Ryan Morais

- Mike Alessi 2
- Darcy Lange
- **Bobby Kiniry** Kyle Partridge

Ryan Villopoto

10 Justin Brayton



was to finish this year and try to do my best. I won me a title [the SX GP crown] and me and my mom was talking

mes Stewart takes his eighth win of the season

about it the other day. You can't look back on the past. There's nothing I could do. All the races I went down in



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two points shy, you've got to look at that as great."

And Carmichael is now a five-time AMA SX champ, ending his final full SX season with yet another title – his 14th AMA National championship.

"It was amazing," Carmichael says. "Man, you guys have no idea what I was telling myself all week. I basically talked myself into this performance tonight. I didn't feel that comfortable all weekend, since St Louis we had to

change some shock springs and stuff like that and going away from the ti spring definitely hurt me.

"I have to thank my mom. Last Tuesday we had a long talk in the shop and it was good. And Aldon Baker, my trainer, we worked hard this week at home and I was super-pumped with the way it went down to get another title in my last full season. Chad is a great competitor and I knew he was going to be on his game."







Bubba ends RC's win streak at 27 then crashes out handing Ricky 50 points on a plate...

WORDS and PHOTOS by Steve Cox

Unlike last year when Kawasaki's James Stewart was onboard a two-stroke KX250 against everyone else on four-stroke 450s, the playing field is now level. This year Stewart's running his new four-stroke KX450F and Ricky Carmichael has his work cut out for him in this, his final season of full-time MX competition.

Carmichael has never lost an AMA National outdoor title. Never. He has two perfect seasons where he won every single moto in 2002 and 2004 and in 2005 he won every single overall, losing only two motos. But he has never raced a full season against James Stewart either...

Carmichael grabs the holeshot in moto one at Hangtown on his Makita Suzuki RM-Z450 but that doesn't last long as he goes down in a heap in the second turn.

Carmichael remounts in last place - although he's 23rd out of 40 by the end of the first lap. Chad Reed assumes the lead and begins to distance himself from the field right away. Stewart moves in behind Reed but stalls. "I was in third I think and Chad went to the outside,"

says Stewart. "I could've just gone on the inside and we would've made contact so I hit the brakes real hard and ended up stalling it. It took a little bit to get it started and I think by that time Ricky was either right behind me or a couple people behind me."

Now that Carmichael and Stewart are tied together they move through the pack on the muddy track quickly until RC moves by Stewart for second at about the halfway point - only for Stewart to pass him right back.

"Just the way the track was, I didn't want to be behind him and run out of tear-offs," claims James. "I just went by him. I got a good drive and I ended up getting alongside him and getting by him. I was really focusing on trying to catch Chad."

It's RC who runs out of tear-offs and he begins to fall behind James after he's forced to throw away his goggles James sets out after Reed who has also jettisoned his.

"I felt good," says Reed of his lead. "I was putting some consistent laps in and I could see these guys battling. I was just kind of staying the same and staying the same and every now and then they would catch me and then I would seem to be able to pull it back out again. In the middle part of the race I just started

missing all my lines and they just gobbled me up."

With two to go Stewart's right behind Reed and with one to go Stewart is looking for a pass, only to mess up at the top of the hill and lose some time. That makes his job more difficult.

'It was a bit slippery up there and I kind of washed the front and I almost fell over and I just had to pick it up going down the downhills. I saw a few lines where I was able to make time up on Chad during the race and I hit my corners perfect that lap and when he went to the outside I was thinking he was going to cover the inside so I ended up getting inside him and making the pass."

From there Stewart takes the victory – his first moto victory in the class outdoors. Reed hangs on for second with Carmichael third.

"The last two laps I just put my head down and tried to go all the way to the end and James got me on the last lap," reckons Reed. "Those two rode great and it was kind of fun just being out there by myself and riding around in the mud at a national.'

Moto two sees another Carmichael holeshot but this time he doesn't fall. He takes off leaving the field behind while Reed and Stewart battle through from the back of the pack.

Carmichael's never headed and Stewart and Reed recover for an easy second and third. That gives the overall to Stewart with Carmichael second, breaking Ricky's amazing 27-race win streak that has lasted outdoors since 2003.

"Just after last year and the stuff that I've always had to distract me I'm really excited to get this," says Stewart. "It's such a big weight off my shoulder. The first moto I rode awesome. I put in 35 strong minutes and me and Ricky had a good battle and I was able to start closing in on Chad and I went for it on the last lap. The second moto I got kind of a bad start and I moved up into second and just kind of sat there. I knew with second I could get the overall and I didn't want to throw it away to try and catch Ricky – he already had a pretty good gap. It's good. It's a big weight off my shoulders.'

Reed has fun on his way to third overall in what could be his last outdoor season as well. "Normally, right after Orlando we would do some outdoor testing and stuff like that but I missed out on that," Reed says of his separated shoulder. "I felt that it was almost better for me because I was able to get some rest and some time away from it and just kind of have these two weeks to ride outdoors. I'm actually enjoying it. It's possibly my last year doing this so I'm just trying to have fun while I'm here."

Perhaps the thing that has saved Carmichael's year more than anything is the inconsistency of his chief competition – Stewart. Both Carmichael and Stewart had more than their share of ups and downs during the 2006 AMP'D Mobile/AMA SX series. Many people expected a few ups and downs from Stewart but it was rather unusual to see the stone-consistent RC have as many off nights as he did.

That bizarre trend continues at Hangtown but after winning moto two - good enough for second overall -Carmichael comes into Mt Morris ready for a fight.

And he gets one!

Stewart actually gets the start at the beginning of the first moto but he gets on the gas a bit too hard in the second turn and spins out a bit allowing Carmichael and Reed by. He quickly re-passes Reed but Carmichael isn't going to go down so easily. Over the next two laps he hounds Carmichael before finally making a pass stick. He begins to pull away from RC – for a couple of laps.

Carmichael begins to lessen the distance at about the halfway point as Stewart gets hung up in traffic. Soon Carmichael is pressuring Stewart for the lead then Carmichael makes a crucial mistake giving back enough ground that Stewart doesn't have to worry about protecting his lines anymore.

Less than a lap later Stewart goes down in an ugly crash that sends a hush over the crowd. Stewart drops



his front end off a step-down jump and flies over the bars violently, landing head-first in the dirt below. He's unconscious for a little while, then sent to the hospital for observation with a precautionary neck brace on. He's later cleared with the diagnosis being a major concussion. With Stewart out Carmichael cruises to an easy

victory. After he and Stewart ride so hard for so long, Carmichael's left with a lead of 65 seconds over second-placed Reed who leads class rookie Davi Millsaps home to complete the podium.

"I was disappointed to see that James had some bad luck today," claims Carmichael. "It's just a shame. I felt like I was in a great place to really capitalise on how I was riding and where my fitness is and it was kicking in. It was right where I wanted it to be. I got a little gift and a gift is good – but not that kind of gift. We both want to win and we were cruising. He had his fast sections and I had my fast sections and it kind of just was equalling out. I just tried to get behind him and stay right there and pressure him.

Carmichael jumps out to the early lead in moto two and that's it. Without Stewart in the field the 2006 Carmichael looks an awful lot like the 2002 and 2004

Carmichael who went undefeated. Reed rides in for a seemingly uneventful second, once again in front of Millsaps in third.

"I wasn't expecting them to be that fast," Millsaps says of Stewart and Carmichael. "I know they're ridiculously fast but they're just like...gone. I was definitely happy with the way I was riding the first half of the motos but they had that ridiculously fast speed and I'm not really there yet - not at all. Hopefully, in the years to come, I can step it up.'

With Stewart dropping 50 points in Mt Morris to Carmichael the championship looks to be all but over - if the typical, doggedly consistent Carmichael shows up for the remaining rounds. But, as they say, there's a reason why they race every race for a championship - anything can happen. So, even with Stewart out of moto two, Carmichael took it as a chance to improve further.

'We changed something on the bike and it was a little bit better and I felt comfortable," RC says. "At the same time I put in some hard laps just because I know those hard laps are coming. It's going to be a long season and I don't want to get in the habit of not charging so I just tried to find seconds here and there."

dbr stateside



MIGHTY MIKEY!

Alessi wins three on the bounce to take an early lead in the two-fiddy four-poppers



Mike Alessi, Ryan Villopoto and Josh Grant have been racing together since they were amateurs and there is no love lost between any of them.

Now, up in the big leagues, they race for the three top teams in their class - Villopoto on the Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki team, Alessi on the Red Bull KTM team and Josh Grant on the SoBe/Samsung Mobile Honda team. And it seems they've picked up right where they left off in their amateur days.

Alessi leads every single lap of his class at Hangtown while Grant and Villopoto are somewhat inconsistent. The dominance is so showing that Alessi all but claims the championship for himself after two of 24 motos are in the books.

"It was a perfect day. I couldn't ask for a better weekend," says Alessi. "It was a great birthday present, going 1-1 and leading every single lap. The only thing that could've been more perfect was getting that second-moto holeshot but it's okay. I've still got 22 more motos to get a bunch more. It feels so great. The championship is mine to lose at this point - I just don't want to do anything to mess it up."

However, after getting his third moto win in a row at Mt Morris following crashes by Grant Langston and Josh Grant that hand him the lead, Alessi goes down early in moto two and can only recover to eighth. The man of the hour is first-moto second-place finisher Villopoto.

"Everybody tries to go out there and win and everybody's super-fast and both motos I got really bad starts and had to work my way through the pack,"

reckons Villopoto. "The first moto was really spread out more than the second one - and I made it into fourth and had some good luck on my side because Josh went down and GL stalled it and that helped me out for the overall for sure.

"After winning a supercross I knew I could do it, it's just that everything had to go my way. A lot of the guys can win out here, they just have to have everything go their way. I think today it went my way and I just tried to ride good and smooth and not fall."

Alessi's able to climb back through the pack to eighth which nets him third overall. "I rode as hard as I could and came back to eighth so there was nothing to complain about. On your bad days, if you salvage as many points as you can it makes for championships. I'm still looking good in the points - I've got an eight-point lead so it's not too bad.'











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The rest of the controls are a mixture of Renthal and Sunline ARC products. The handlebars are our long-term favourite – Kevin Windham bend Renthal Twinwalls. These are attached to our bike through a set of MBO Racing triple-clamps that with their 22mm offset – compared to the stock unit's 25mm – help the bike turn sharper without losing any high-speed stability.

Soft and tacky Kevlar dual compound Renthal grips help keep our pilot's hand on the bars with the throttle side grip fitted to a Sunline aluminium throttle-tube that's much tougher than the plastic stocker.

Control levers are Sunline forged flex units with the clutch side using a mega trick Sunline perch. A Sunline hot-start lever/master-cylinder clamp is also used – replacing the stock unit or the front brake master-cylinder.

One of the coolest things on the whole bike has to be the SDG stepped seat. With stepped seats being all the rage for fo-fiddy riders in the GPs and in the US of A it's good to know you can now buy a complete stepped seat from





shifting a fair few more of these.

As well as the seat coming in for a total make-over the front mudguard and numberplate have also been totally replaced by sensual vented Cycra products. Cycra make the sexiest plastic products available on the moto-market and we just knew we had to have some on our bike. The vented aspect of their trickness should also help get a little more air through to our oversize radiators and keep things cooler in mid-summer motos.

The finishing touches to the bike are the bits of Sunline bling – brake reservoir cap, engine oil caps and rim-lock bolts – and the bespoke custom graphics made by Blink MX. Tom at Blink is (in Sutty's opinion) the finest custom graphics manufacturer in the UK and was the only person he'd trust to make our in-house designed graphics. We're more than happy with the final look of the bike and now we can't wait to get out there and properly try it!

CHEERS GUYS...

Thanking the people who helped make this happen

Without the help of the following companies and the mechanical expertise of technical editor Geoff Walker – who's also the mechanical genius behind SR-75 – we'd never have been able to complete this project or make our Honda magazine machine half as trick as it is. Because they're all equally as important to us we've chosen to put them in alphabetical order. Thanks a lot guys we really appreciate your help...

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TOP TIPS Maximise your performance

- · Consume a balanced diet in the build up to exercising or racing
- Drink about 500ml of fluid about two hours before exercise
- · During exercise drink early and at regular intervals
- For exercise over an hour in duration include carbohydrate in your drink, for exercise less than an hour there is little benefit of including it
- Including a mix of carbohydrate and protein in your drink after exercise will help speed up recovery



THERE ARE some products that start off designed for a specific task but, thanks to clever marketing, end up being embraced by the general public - far away from their originally

Energy drinks fall into this category and can be found in almost every shop and garage alongside pies, pasties and pre-packed sandwiches. Obviously this is all well and good for the manufacturers and their profits but I'm more interested in whether or not they

actually work?

Prolonged exercise requires a ready supply of carbohydrate to burn and give energy. The body only has a finite supply of this and after about 45 minutes to an hour of exercise the body stores fall. Many sports require the ability to sustain moderate to hard levels of exercise for well beyond this period and without the intake of carbohydrate your power output will drop dramatically as you rely on the burning of fat to produce energy.

Carbohydrate has also been shown to improve motor skills during exercise - and you don't want those to drop during a 35-minute moto so a low level of carbohydrate is to

There is also an interesting effect on the central nervous system. The brain can notice a change in the contents of the mouth and stomach and this can affect mood and the perception of effort. For example, if you've been out training in the heat for hours and have very low blood sugar levels a bite of a Mars bar or cold drink can immediately make you feel better even though the carbohydrate has had no time to be used by the body to raise blood

When you take into account the need to supply water to inhibit dehydration you can see why energy drinks are a great tool for athletes – they deliver water, carbohydrate and other beneficial substances such as sodium, potassium and some 'wonder

substances' such as caffeine.

As mentioned, dehydration is a very important subject to address and has a great effect on performance. A healthy 70kg male will be made up of about 42 litres of water and a loss of about one-and-a-half litres is enough to have a significant effect on performance. As it is often necessary to sweat the equivalent of two litres of water per hour to give sufficient cooling, you can immediately see the importance of

water regulation and intake!
It's been found that 70 grams of carbohydrate per hour is an ideal amount to take in – any more and the benefits are limited but the risk of stomach cramps or discomfort is increased. This amount can be found in one-and-a-half litres of sports drink such as Science in Sport PSP22, 600ml Coke, one Powerbar, three bananas or 120-150 grams

This is ideal quantity to consume during exercise of more than an hour in duration but it



is not always easy to do so. However, Camelbaks and other similar systems allow hands-free drinking and will make a big difference to an enduro rider as carbohydrate

levels and hydration can be maintained.
Salt and other electrolytes are often added to sports drinks to replace those lost in sweat, increase water uptake, increase water retention and prevent hyponatremia (low salt levels due to taking on far too much water). These are especially important in the heat and for a rider they are very relevant as with helmet, gloves and the other riding gear on, sweat loss will be

very high in hot conditions.

Water is the essential requirement for re-hydration and small amounts of carbohydrate and salt will aid the uptake of water and help you rehydrate. However, if you add too much carbohydrate to the drink it will actually reduce the uptake of water so look for drinks labeled isotonic.
For recovery it is also very important to

replace water and carbohydrate and it has been shown that the inclusion of protein helps carbohydrate replenishment. It's worth noting here that caffeine is discouraged in the

recovery phase.

Caffeine is becoming a buzz word for performance improvements and is included in many of the supermarket energy drinks. Caffeine has been shown to increase performance duration if consumed prior to exercise due to increasing the use of fats as a fuel, thus sparing carbohydrate. It can also improve cognitive function and concentration.

However, there are drawbacks to caffeine. It is a diuretic in a resting condition so not good for pre-exercising or racing when hydration is important. It can also lead to headaches, elevated blood pressure and irritability. There are many different drinks available in

your local supermarket. Lucozade sports drinks provide a source of carbohydrate (albeit with the addition of stabilisers, flavourings and

preservatives). Redbull is ever present and has a big presence on the MX and extreme sport scene. This drink actually only contains 11 grams of carbohydrate per 100 grams and contains taurine and caffeine as well as vitamins and flavouring.

A quick scan down the can is interesting as it shows it contains 200 per cent of your recommended daily allowance of vitamin B12 and 100 per cent rda of vitamin B6. This drink is much more akin to Coke as a carbonated. tasty drink to go with your wander around town. Its only source of energy will really be its high

caffeine content – almost double that of Coke.

Another drink I spotted in the shops was Relentless, an 'energy drink' company that's actually owned by Coca Cola. Relentless is much the same as Redbull with only small amounts of carbohydrate and interestingly identical levels of taurine and caffeine although as the can is twice the size of Redbull it will give a huge shot of caffeine.

Like it or lump it, Dougie Lampkin is coming to the end of his career - luckily for British trials fans there's a crop of super-talented young stars waiting in the wings...

Words by g2f.co.uk Photos by g2f.co.uk and Eric Kitchen

WHILE DOUGIE Lampkin remains our great British hope for lifting another world trials title in the short term, the reality is that his riding career is now nearing its end.
However, before you put your head in your hands in utter despair, there's light that promises to shine beyond Lampkin's well-extended shelf life.

The current crop of young British trials riders is the envy of the world with good strength in depth and the real possibility of a future world champion coming from their ranks. In more recent years it has been the Spanish who have produced the best of the emerging young riders on the world scene but now the tables have turned and it's

the British young guns who are making their presence felt on the international stage.

Lampkin's long reign at the top of world trials has been an incredible inspiration for this new pack of home-grown talent with Dougie remaining a great and willing source of knowledge and encouragement for these young guys as they travel the globe under his fatherly shadow. While publicly each one of these young guns respects the achievements of the best trials rider the planet has ever seen, it wouldn't be healthy if they weren't secretly plotting Lampkin's demise.

With the world trials championship heading to our shores next month (Hawkstone Park - July 29/30) we recently caught up with Britain's young trials pretenders to get some background on the boys who hope one day to be as big a star as Lampkin has been over the last decade.





MICHAEL BROWN

Taking over from where Dabill left off, Michael currently heads the world Junior standings having only suffered one defeat so far this season. Brown's victory at the opening round in Spain was a real sensation and really put the more favoured home pairing of

Daniel Oliveras and Daniel Gibert on the back foot. Riding for the same Italian team as Dabill, Brown now looks odds-on favourite to follow in his team-mate's tyre marks which would be a real achievement for a rider who carries the nickname of the 'mighty atom' thanks to being no taller than a pint of milk.

DBR: Can you remember how you came to be a trials rider? MB: "Like with most kids, my dad was a keen trials rider and bought me a Yamaha PW50 with stabilizers not long after my second birthday, although it wasn't until I was five when I rode my first trial at Harwood Dale near Scarborough.

DBR: What are your best achievements to date? MB: "Being one of perhaps only three riders to win all four [C, D, B and A class] British youth trials titles is something I am extremely proud of. But my biggest success to date has got to be winning my first ever Junior world round in Germany last year. With James having moved up I really wanted to make my mark and I think that win gave me good confidence coming into this year."

DBR: Which rider do you use as a role model and why? MB: "Dougie without doubt as he is a true champion in every respect. I have watched and followed him while I've been growing up, one day wanting to do the same things as he has done. I am proud to say that he has stayed at my house and I have been practising with him quite a few times which is a real privilege. While he is obviously a great rider, for me the most important thing about him is his determination and commitment."





LEE SAMPSON

Fifth in last year's Youth championship, Lee made himself a lot of friends in the paddock thanks to his refreshing approach to doing his best despite

doing his best despite operating on limited resources. While too many youngsters complain or refuse to compete without all the trimmings, Lee often begged a minder from where ever he could and spent several nights sleeping on the front seats of the Sherco factory truck just so he could make it to the starting line.

DBR: Were you always destined to become a trials rider?

LS: 'No as my dad bought me a motocross bike when I was five years old. It was a Christmas present but with no real purpose other than being just another present. My dad took me to a local motocross track where I showed no real interest in riding my new bike but instead was fascinated by some older lads on trials bikes.

"I proudly announced to my dad that I wanted a trials bike and not a motocross bike which he answered by saying 'that will be another waste of time'. Anyway, I pestered him and eventually got a trials bike."

DBR: How has this season been so far?
LS: "I'm disappointed with my results in the
Junior world championship if I'm honest. I have
been unlucky on a couple of occasions as the
marks have been so close but being late on time
is my big problem at the moment. Without this I
would be much higher in the championship.
"The highlight of this year so far has been being
the best 125 at the Scottish Six Days Trial.
This was a great result for me as I have never
ridden the event before and only got my entry
confirmed a week before the trial started."







SAM HASLAM

Sam currently sits in third place in the world Youth series thanks to some consistent showings at the first three rounds. Finishing runner-up to

Wigg during the opening day of the American event is Haslam's best result to date and one he'll be looking to improve on if he's to hold a top three spot come the close of the season.

DBR: So how did the whole trials thing begin? **SH:** "Our family has a long history of trials with my dad, uncle and grandad all having ridden at some stage. Although I don't like saying it, my dad was quite a good rider and was Midlands centre champion a few times — at least that's what he's told me! I got my first bike when I was four years old and rode my first trial when I was seven. I can still remember my first trial, it was at

a place called Dews Farm which is only about a mile from where I live. I dropped just one mark and won my class so it was a very happy day for me."

DBR: What are your goals this year?
SH: "My main aim is to be in the top three in the world Junior championship although I know that isn't going to be easy as there are a lot of good young riders, most of them British. I need to get some good results at the other rounds as I am not going to Japan as it is just too expensive. Thankfully only your 10 best results count so I've still got a chance of reaching my goal."

DBR: Are you a full-time professional trials rider? SH: "Unfortunately, not at the moment. Currently I am working for a local construction company during the week who also happens to be a sponsor and is kind enough to let me have enough time off to ride in all the trials I need to. This kind of limits when I can practice. I try to get out a couple of times a week after work and also on a Saturday when I'm at home.

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Having dominated the world Junior (18-21 years old) championship last season, Dabill has made the switch to the main championship class with relative ease. His three

point scoring rides at the end of last year at this level, after he moved up early having clinched the Junior title with rounds to spare, really put him in good shape ready for his full assault in 2006.

With three rounds gone James holds an incredible eighth place in the current series with a seventh position at the Portuguese Grand Prix being his best individual result to date. Riding for the Italianbased Top Trials Team, Dabill is the highest ranked rider without direct factory support - although his privately prepared Beta is lacking nothing in the power department.

DBR: Are you happy with the way the outdoor season has started?

JD: "Yeah I suppose I am. At the first round I started off a little shaky but it's always hard to get going at the beginning of the season I find. But at the second round I got my backside into gear and I had a seventh place which I'm really happy about. The two eighth places in the US were okay but could have been better.

DBR: Do you feel extra pressure now that we have lost Graham Jarvis and the other British riders out of the top class and there's only you and Dougie flying

JD: "No, not really. All I think about is beating other riders and improving my own riding. Everyone is a threat whatever their nationality. Of course, I am proud to carry the Union Jack but that's something that gives me strength rather than bringing added pressure."

DBR: Has Dougie had an influence on your riding career?

JD: "Yeah, definitely. I think Dougie has inspired a lot of people, not just the British riders but riders from all over the world. He is the ultimate champion in every respect because not only is he a great rider, he is always prepared to help you. He is a very special person and has become a good friend."





ROSS DANBY

Danby shot to fame last summer when he finished as runner-up in the Youth category of his home GP at Hawkstone Park. In front of 8,000 cheering fans the tall, lean frame of Ross stepped up on to the podium looking

utterly bewildered as the scale of his achievement began to sink in.

Danby only scored points at two rounds last year during a very limited campaign but this season he's making his presence felt with some solid scoring rides at all but the opening GP where mechanical failure sidelined him.

DBR: How important was your ride at Hawkstone Park

RD: "I think it was one of my best days ever, to produce such a good ride on such a big stage was something you dream of. It was an incredible day as I was a bit nervous when I got up on to the starting ramp and realized just how many people were there. Somehow I managed to block that nervous feeling out and just got on with my riding. Then towards the end of the day I was quite enjoying the cheers I was getting, especially as I stepped up to collect my trophy. Let's hope I can do the same again this year."

DBR: Dare we ask who your favourite rider is? RD: "I know it isn't very British but Adam Raga is the rider I look up to. I really like his flamboyant riding style and his whole approach. Indoors he is in a class of his own but outdoors he has got opposition from several riders like Lampkin, Fujinami, Bou and Cabestany. I am working on my own riding having studied Raga on DVD and I hope I can ride at the same level in the future. That's my real goal."





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ALEXZ WIGG



His two wins at the US Grand Prix have put Alexz Wigg at the head of the world Youth (16-18 years old/125cc) standings but the young British rider knows that to claim the

title he is going to have to defeat Loris Gubian on a regular basis as the French pilot dominated the opening two rounds.

Like Lampkin, Wigg has a strong motorcycling background with his dad Julian having been a good national speedway and grasstrack rider and his famous uncle Simon having won the world speedway and long track titles.

DBR: Why trials and not speedway? AW: "By the time I was ready to ride my dad was riding trials as he was a bit too old for anything faster so he got me a bike so that I could ride with him. I think he did consider getting me involved in MX but decided that trials was a lot slower and a lot safer."

DBR: Do you think you will shift sports in the future? AW: "There is part of me that would like to have a go at motocross and enduro as I am sure that my trials experience would definitely help me. But at this moment the only thing I am interested in is trials and I am really concentrating on that as I don't think you can be at the top of your game unless you are giving 110 per cent to what you are doing."

DBR: Which rider do you try to emulate? AW: "I think we all want to be Dougie Lampkin as he is so special - I think his seven outdoor titles tell you that. I would like his determination and the riding style of Adam Raga or Toni Bou as the Spanish have created a new riding style. Everything they do is on the back wheel and with so much control but what is incredible is that Dougie is still living with them despite riding in a more traditional way."



ASIYA



With nothing but rain, rain and even more rain in the run up to round four of the Maxxis British championships at Landrake it had to be the worst race of the season so far, right? Wrong!

Words and photos by Sutty

IF BLUE skies, bank holiday sunshine, top-notch race action and an abundance of bright green plastic thunder-boxes are all that are needed to take British championship motocross to the next level then we've arrived because round four at Landrake has all these things and more!

The weather in the run up to the event is somewhat wet and rumours are rife of cancellation or an all-out bogfest (although...). But as it turns out the track's in absolutely

perfect condition and as the day prog roughens up nicely creating plenty of lines, plenty of passing opportunities and really sorts the men out from the boys.

And it's Ken De Dycker who's the man in MX1. The CAS star comfortably takes a double win as he goons himself around the track a good second or so quicker than anyone else. Of course, Ken might have had it tougher in moto two if Gordon Crockard's split-link hadn't removed itself from the chain on the opening lap while Ken was battling through the pack after a crappy start.

But by the time Gordy storms back to the

Wulfsport team truck (and then tracks down Honda's head honcho Roger Harvey to apologise for some unkind hand signals the fiery Ulsterman gestured towards his stricken machine) Ken is way out front with RWJ's James Noble chasing hard. While Noble's never one to give up today's just never gonna be his day and a pair of seconds will have to do

for the ever improving Yorkshireman.

Julien Bill – the Swiss man with a phobia of lapped riders (he screams like a little girl every time one appears in front of him) - finishes third first time out and looks to have second in the bag in moto two. But the Bike-It Dixon rider boils his back brake, slips off and stalls the Yamaha in a corner. In the time it takes to restart the YZF's hot motor Julien's slipped back to seventh and his will to fight seems to be totally sapped. So sapped in fact that Honda-mounted privateer Danny Smyth sneaks by in the closing laps leaving Bill eighth for

With Bill out of the equation for the final podium spot a battle between pole-setting PAR Honda rider Mark Jones and Motovision's Beast from the South East Neville Bradshaw erupts. Despite Jones applying serious amounts of pressure all moto long, Nevster seems to have



third overall tied up tight until halfway around the last lap when his Suzuki fo-fiddy coughs, bangs and splutters to a halt. It's difficult to tell who's most upset over at

Motovision – Neville or newly-shorn team-boss Mark Chamberlain – as the DNF puts a dampener on an already disappointing day (MX2 rider Jake Nicholls has a nightmare and Jussi's a non-starter) for the normally upbeat Suzuki squad. However, there are smiles all round in the PAR awning as Jones secures their premiere MX1 podium.

Things ain't so smiley for PAR's main-man in the MX2 class, Wayne Smith, who's still suffering from his Hawkstone get-off. With Wayne struggling to walk on a badly injured knee it's unlikely the man with no nickname will

be bothering the leaders this weekend.
In fact there are no real surprises at all in
MX2 as Billy Mac and Carl Nunn share a win apiece and Tommy gives them both a headache

he can.

Moto one looks set to be a barn-stormer as the three big guns get out of the gate together and look set to do battle. But it appears that someone forgets to tell Billy Mac to make a fight of it. There's absolutely no stopping the Scotsman who starts behind both his rivals before passing and blasting away at the front while Nunny holds on for second.

But Tommy's got things a little bit tougher. A mid-race crash and then a bar-to-bar battle to the flag with Pioneer Yamaha's Brad Anderson sees Tommy finally finish fourth while Ando makes his first podium appearance of the year.

It's a very different story in moto two though. Searle grabs the holeshot but before lap one is done Nunny's moved out front with Tommy and Billy both chasing hard. It's Billy Mac who's first to crack as the

championship leader's lanky-legs catch a rut

wrong and flip the Yamaha star off his bike.
Even though he never lets go of the bars or tips right over by the time Billy's controlled his rodeo ride Tommy's team-mate Swanepoel has slipped by into third.

But third is a position Gareth won't hold for long as the South African gets a wee bit buck wild himself and goes down hard at the midway.

wild himself and goes down hard at the midway point giving third back to Billy and that's the way it stays to the flag!

After all that chopping and changing the MX2 championship points table is still nice and tight with Billy leading the way on a grand total of 211 (that's just freakin' spooky) and Searle in second eight points back while reigning champ Nunny's a further three points behind the nipper.

With everything to play for in MX2 and the Crock Star starving for some success on home soil in MX1, round five at Desertmartin – on June 24 – should be a cracker (or is that craicer?)! We'll see you there!





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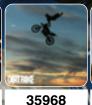


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TOMMY SEARLE

"Today was okay but it could have been better. I was second at the start of the first moto then Billy came past me and he was riding really aggressively. I was comfortable in third but then made a silly mistake – I went into a berm that had been blown out by Billy and Carl and went down. I got going again in fourth and just ran out of time to get back past Brad Anderson before the chequered flag.

"I had the holeshot in the next race but made a small mistake and Carl came by. We had a battle for the first half of the moto but I wasn't riding that well - I made a lot of big mistakes and he broke away.



LANDRAKE LUNACY...

Toilet Trouble!

There's never normally anywhere near enough toilets at motocross events so it was nice to see a few more than normal at Landrake. In fact there were so many Portaloos scattered around the track it was near enough impossible to take a photo without getting one of the green monstrosities in the shot. If you don't believe how bad/good it was count how many Portaloos you can find in the photos from this event (answer in the bottom corner of page 10).

Bry Mac Back!

It's good to see Billy's cousin Bryan on track and scoring good points on only his second ride back from (yet another) injury on the Twisted-7 Kawasaki. It seems that a change from two-smoke to four-popper power and a lack of sleep (a malfunctioning fire alarm back at the hotel keeps Bry awake long past his bedtime) does the boy a whole heap of good.

While the ACU saw fit to penalise three riders for 'noise offences' not a thing was done about the one rider who continued to jump the 'Landrake Leap' step-down at full race speed under waved yellow flags and right in front of an ACU official.

It becomes more understandable that dangerous riding like this is acceptable in that ACU official's eyes when you take into account that the same official instructed a flag marshal from an adjacent piece of track to leave his position on a semi-blind jump - while racing was still in progress - to remove a track marker post that had been knocked on to the racing line. Apparently he was either too important to move the post himself or just didn't want to get his hands dirty.

Swap n' change!

Jason Dougan turns up at Landrake with a shiny new bike to go with his latest spanking new haircut. The ex RWJ teamster ditched the twin-pipe Honda mid-week and rolled out on a fully-pimped EA KTM. Despite only riding the bike briefly before Landrake a first race sixth which equals his best result of the year so far – and a good showing early in moto two shows that things are finally looking up for Doogie.

CARL NUNN

MX2 LANDRAKE 2-1

"I was chasing Billy in the first race and waiting for the last few laps to make a pass but he managed to pull a bit of a gap on me mid-race by jumping the step-down under waved yellows and then on the same lap I had a bit of trouble with back-markers so he pulled away.

"Race two was much better and it was good to win and claw some points back in the championship.



GLEN PHILLIPS

MX1 LANDRAKE 11-5

"I just tried to have an uneventful day today without killing myself or breaking something. I rode like a muppet in the first one but I was happy in the second one."



BRYAN MACKENZIE

"First race I got a good jump but got boxed out by Bill and Crockard but then there was a massive crash in the first turn and I got through on the inside and came out of it about 12th. From there I just concentrated on avoiding the roost and the crashes and tripling the whoops every lap and got the job done.

"I got the worst start possible in moto two then crashed and span out - I didn't get any arm-pump at all for the first time ever. I kept going and caught Julien right at the end - I think he'd spat the dummy out."



Results - round four

| IVIAI | | 1000 |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------|
| 1 Ken De Dycker | (CAS Honda) | 30+30=60 |
| 2 James Noble | (RWJ Honda) | 27+27=54 |
| 3 Mark Jones | (PAR Honda) | 23+23=46 |
| 4 Julien Bill | (Bike It Dixon Yamaha) | 25+15=40 |
| 5 Glen Phillips | (Pioneer Yamaha) | 10+21=31 |
| 6 Bryan MacKenzie | (Twisted-7 Kawasaki) | 17+13=30 |
| 7 Alex Rach | (PAR Honda) | 19+10=29 |
| 8 Mark Eastwood | (Wiseco Honda) | 7+19=26 |
| 9 Danny Smyth | (Honda) | 9+17=26 |
| 10 Mark Hucklebridge | (MotoXtreme Kawasaki) | 0+25=25 |
| | | |

| 1000 | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| MX2 | | |
| 1 Carl Nunn | (EA KTM) | 27+30=57 |
| 2 Billy MacKenzie | (Bike It Dixon Yamaha) | 30+25=55 |
| 3 Tommy Searle | (Molson Kawasaki) | 23+27=50 |
| 4 Brad Anderson | (Pioneer Yamaha) | 25+21=46 |
| 5 Gareth Swanepoel | (Molson Kawasaki) | 17+23=40 |
| 6 Shaun Simpson | (Wulfsport Honda) | 21+19=40 |
| 7 Wayne Smith | (PAR Honda) | 15+17=32 |
| 8 Martin Kohut | (GOMX Honda) | 11+13=24 |
| 9 Tom Church | (Molson Kawasaki) | 13+11=24 |
| 10 Scott Probert | (Wulfsport Honda) | 7+15=22 |
| Se ries standings | | The second second |

1 De Dycker 231 points, 2 Noble 198, 3 Jones 158, 4 Sword 158, 5 Crockard 137, 6 Bradshaw 105, 7 Hucklebridge 94, 8 Barr 90, 9 Rach 86, 10 Rose 82

MX2 1 MacKenzie 211 points, 2 Searle 203, 3 Nunn 200, 4 Swanepoel 166, 5 Anderson 160, 6 Smith 152, 7 Simpson 104, 8 Dougan 89, 9 Kohut 86, 10 Probert 84



GARETH SWANEPOEL

MX2 LANDRAKE 7-4

"It was not the best day and I'm disappointed with my results. I had a really bad start in the first race and had to push up to fifth then I had a small crash which dropped me another two positions. That seventh place really fired me up for the next heat.

"The start was a little bit better in the second moto and I went from fourth to third in five laps and was pushing strong for second but then I washed out the front end - it was a pretty big crash. There have been better races.'



BILLY MACKENZIE

MX2 LANDRAKE 1-3

"The first race was pretty easy but I whacked my hand and wasn't riding well so I was surprised that I could win like that. I took a load of painkillers in between the motos and kept positive. After four or five laps the adrenaline kicked in and my hand wasn't hurting that much. I made a big mistake and caught my foot on the side of a rut and it took me a little while to get my speed back. I was catching Tommy for second but then I had a small crash four laps before the end and just decided to bring the bike home."



KEN DE DYCKER 1 LANDRAKE 1.1

"I've never been here before but I think like most of the good riders I can ride well everywhere I want. The track here's pretty good and I'm happy to win.



MX2 LANDRAKE 4-4

"It hasn't been a bad day overall. My knee's been a bit of a pain and stopped me pushing as hard as I wanted. I should have forced my way by Neville in the second moto but third overall and in points - is good. Just happy to stay consistent and keep pushing on from here.





"I made a good start in the opening race - I was happy with my speed and I was following the leading group and I was coming stronger towards the end of the moto but still couldn't make up enough ground to catch and pass Noble. Third was good, it is my best result of the season in the British championship.

"I led race two for several laps until De Dycker caught and passed me. I was riding good and smooth on the bike then I started to have some rear brake fade. This caused me to lose concentration and the front end washed out then I struggled to restart the engine. I finished eighth which was inside the top 10 but frustrating when I knew that I could and should have been second."







"THAT WAS one of the hardest WEC events I think I've ever done," admits David Knight at the end of the third round of the '06 World Enduro Championship. "I like tough events and that's what we seem to be getting this year. I know some riders aren't happy with how challenging the races are this year but I reckon they're great."

Following the WEC's first ever winter enduro in Sweden the enduro world championship travels to Portugal and Spain for rounds two and three and things get tough. With Portugal dry and dusty and Spain wet and muddy the two races see the same riders doing the winning and a new name sitting at the top of the Enduro 2 world championship standings -

Frenchman Johnny Aubert.
In Portugal victory is split between Italian Simone Albergoni and Spaniard Ivan Cervantes in the Enduro 1 class as the pair battle tooth and nail on day one with Albergoni claiming his first win of the season. With Cervantes placing second having been unsettled by the theft of much of his race gear prior to the start, he gets faster as the day progresses and finishes just a bendful of season habited. handful of seconds behind Albergoni.

On day two Cervantes is out for revenge and

duly tops the E1 class, 30 seconds up on Albergoni. With the Italian unable to stop the charging Spaniard he still finishes comfortably ahead of countryman Alessandro Belometti.

One week later and Cervantes claims an important double win in the E1 class. Competing in front of his home fans, not even the wet weather can reduce the factory KTM rider's speed as he tops both days one and two to extend his world championship advantage.

"In Portugal I felt that I had the speed to win on both days but I wasn't completely focused on day one," explains Ivan. "On day two I was determined to show that I was the fastest rider and I won. In Spain I was worried about the extreme test because it was so easy to make a big mistake. It means a lot to me to win at my home race, especially as the conditions

were wet."

Despite being concerned about the extreme test it's Ivan's rival Simone Albergoni who comes unstuck on the all-natural special stage and places fourth at the end of the first day having been in a position to win. With Belometti riding well to claim the runner-up spot, Pole Bartosz Oblucki shows that there's still life in two-strokes in the E1 class and places a

solid third on his Husqvarna.

Day two is a very similar story, just without any mistakes from Albergoni. Cervantes places first to further extend his world championship lead while Albergoni finishes second with Belometti third.

Expected to be little more than a two-rider battle for the title, the Enduro 2 class has become the most hotly contested championship in the WEC this season with four riders showing the speed to win. With last year's top two Samuli Aro and Stefan Merriman once again fast, Finn Mika Ahola has returned to form in spectacular style while enduro rookie Johnny Aubert has been the dark horse of the class.

Yamaha team-mates Merriman and Aubert claim a day win each in Portugal to take their first wins of the season. With Merriman finishing on top on day one and ahead of Finns Aro and Ahola on day two, Aubert claims his first ever WEC win in only his second world championship enduro event.

Proving just how quickly he has adjusted to the world championship and his 450cc Yamaha, Aubert shows that despite his relative lack of experience he appears to have what it takes to run for the title.











"It's great to have had such a good weekend," admits Johnny in Portugal. "I wanted to try and finish on the podium here but to win is something really special. With Merriman, Aro and Ahola the competition in the E2 class is very strong. I have to try and remain consistent now and keep pushing hard."

In Spain, in very different conditions to Portugal, Aubert again shows that he has what it takes to win the E2 world title in his first season and finishes in second to Merriman on day one before topping day two.

"Johnny is riding really well," explains Merriman. "I had a good first day but Johnny was just so fast on day two I couldn't keep with him. I expected him to be fast at some races but not as fast as he has been at all the races."

Finishing third on day one is defending class champion Aro while Honda-mounted Ahola claims the final podium spot on day two. Having scaled the top spot of the podium on the second day in both Portugal and Spain Aubert leads the E2 world championship.

After missing the season opener in Sweden

Paul Edmondson gets his world championship campaign off the ground in Portugal where he places fifth and sixth to start his world championship season well.

Hoping that the Spanish event would be wetter than it was, Eddy again places fifth and sixth beating several of the class's younger factory backed riders along the way. "I'm well happy with my results," confirms Paul. "I don't have the speed to beat Aubert, Merriman, Ahola and Aro but I know that I have what is needed to finish behind them."

While things are good for Edmondson they're not so good for TM-mounted Euan McConnell. With his bike expiring while en route to the end-of-event work area on day one in Portugal on day two he finishes in 11th. In Spain, hoping that the wetter conditions will suit him, Euan opts for a different suspension set-up which doesn't work as well as he hopes. As a result Euan places in 12th on both days.

Keen to get back to his winning ways after topping the E3 class in Sweden, David Knight claims victory in the Enduro 3 class on both

days in Portugal and then again on both days in Spain. In doing so he becomes the only rider in this year's WEC series to remain unbeaten.

"I knew that I was riding well but with such a long gap after the world championship race in Sweden I was glad to get racing again in Portugal. Both Portugal and Spain were tough but that's good for me. I was fortunate to finish in Spain as my bike lost its coolant."

Finishing behind David on both days at rounds two and three is his KTM team-mate Marko Tarkkala while Bjorne Carlsson claims third on both days in Portugal and two-stroke Gas Gas and TM riders Seb Guillaume and Alessio Paoli finish third in Spain.

In the Enduro Junior class Spaniard Oriol Mena and Swede Joakim Ljunggren claim a day win each in Portugal while in Spain Ljunggren and Brit-based Aussie Jake Stapleton share the top spot. After promising results in Portugal, Britain's only EJ class competitor Si Wakely has a disappointing weekend in Spain, placing 12th on day one before a mechanical problem puts him out on day two.





tea. Max Nagl and his gang are in the Chisun too but nobody goes too close before the weekend as BA lost their bags at Heathrow and they're still in Wednesday's trollies until Friday evening.

The Brits found a neat pizzeria in downtown Sendai last year and I'm a nationalised Italian when Lintroduce Silver Action to the best and cheapest nosh in town at the Saizeriya - six quid for a steak, 30 bob for a pizza. So it's two steaks all round when the bread doesn't arrive until the first one's been devoured without. "This real Italian food but no possible eat steak with

no panne," explains Rui's boss as he actually lets his first one get cold waiting.

Yes and no is about the language limit for most oriental kids in the provinces still. The girls go off in fits of giggles at every word in English, not like in Tokyo where even the cleaner on the

train can put a broken sentence together.

Billy's left Steve at home – "It's cool, No pressure. Just riding and the track's megal" - so he's only sharing the Bike It Ez-Up with Julien Bill and mechanics Ben Popperwell and Mikey Whitewick. Well, almost, as Avril's along for the ride. Billy's had a paint job of her on his best helmet, it's a picture from the album sleeve - the one where it looks like she's having a pee up against a wall. "My favourite picture of her,"

claims Billy.

But Billy's lid is one of the few paddock novelties the press are supposed to see. Suzuki request everyone keeps a respectable distance from their fuel injection bike, Yamaha keep the sides on the awning and Honda even keep the covers over theirs at the wash bay. What do they think we will spy except the injection system casings are a different shape to a carb.

Moto Roman actually lay their bike over







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to see the Kayaba rear launch control lock and there's a steering damper on the HRC bike with a carb. "One's been sent over for Josh to try," tells Harvey. "Ken can't tell the difference."

Lorenzo and Mickey have brought over their mobile kitchen and three tons of Barilla noodles again – most welcome as the rice trays so kindly offered by the organisers are not exactly what you'd call food.

Saturday is track time. Yogi can't bring the dogs so the missus locks him up with Antti in the boot of the car for the drive to the track. It seems to work as the Great Dane has his best race of the year!

Dave Nicoll makes the MX2 boys go through two heats and the LCQ to find 30 qualifiers from 30 arrivals on Saturday. "It's good for the Japanese to practice start procedure." Watching 15 guys following each other round for 25 minutes is not a buzz for the crowd though.

The pre-race show is five Samurai on horseback. When they start chasing flags with their swords in a kind of Japanese Quidditch the photographers don't need asking twice to get behind the fences and there's even a clean-up job on the start straight afterwards. Can't have anyone suffering wheelspin halfway to the first turn can we?

Tony Cairoli has got the starts pegged again but he slips off on the first lap as does

De Reuver. Billy is soon past Gundersen and simply walks it. "I'm always best when I can ride my own race with no-one getting in my way." Steve Guttridge gets so excited he's hanging over the fence cheering the boy on. "Then Christophe got to second so I thought I'd better stop," jokes Steve.

The French boy chases home second in race one and rides his balls off from last to fifth in race two after getting cut up at the gate to earn the red plate. But he's no concern for the overall so Billy only needs third to repeat last year's GP win as long as De Reuver can't catch Tony C. And the Sicilian is not going to let him. The only danger is Swanny who's chasing

The only danger is Swanny who's chasing so hard that he and Billy are setting record laps to the end — "now I want a podium more than ever" — and all four Brits end the day top seven with Tommy Gun rattling out the laps and Nunny finding his way five laps into race two. "I had some mega lines and couldn't believe no-one else was on them."

Tyla's had a bummer with arm-pump in the first after hitting Gundersen's rear wheel and a trip to the clinic while race two is still running after Seb Pourcel comes across his front wheel on lap one. Nothing broken but the South African has probably ripped muscles in his shoulder.

Up in MX1 there's only one worry for

Stefano. "Where were they? I expected more after Teutschenthal." Both Leok and Strijbos had kept the champ honest for half-an-hour in Germany but the Suzuki boy gets a roasting from Sylvain at the interval. "I tagged on expecting him to pull me through," reckons Danny Theybers "But he was holding me un!"

Danny Theybers. "But he was holding me up!"
Tanel and De Dycker are the only two within two seconds of Stefan and both start too far back to ever see him while race two is Ramon versus Barragan for second with nobody else less than three seconds off the pace of the champ.

Tanel collides with a Japanese rider on lap one and Ken's times drop dramatically after five laps. He is encouraged to revive a little at the end to maintain his first podium and his tongue stays far enough out of the front wheel for him to explain he got cramp in his arms.

It's been a long way to go for Huck to end up in the fence on lap one both times but James Noble gets his best result of the year to end the day sixth – the only non-Belgian resident in the top 10 – but he should be pushing the podium. At least he's now tied with Julien Bill in the points, the Swiss star less happy on the soft dirt than he has been a fortnight earlier on the German hard-pack, even though his habit of tagging Everts in practice is paying off in finding lines.









WOMEN'S WORLD CUP Ladies launch in Germany



after tving on points with Livia Lancelot, one year

Together with title holder Stefanie Laier, who bottles never quess

Stefan is riding lines which no-one else can find - in MX1 at least - making it look like a Super G on the downhills. But when I suggest Jools has learned lines from Stefan, Billy Mac chirps up with "Whadya mean? Stefan's taking my lines!" There's nothing like confidence is there!

RESULTS - ROUND 4

| 1 | Stefan Everts |
|---|----------------|
| 2 | Kevin Striihos |

Tanel Leok

Ken De Dycker

Steve Ramon

Pascal Leuret

Julien Bill

Brian Jorgensen Jonathan Barragan

Manuel Priem

James Noble

Mark Hucklebridge 22

Tommy Searle

Gareth Swanepoe

(Rinaldi Yamaha) (Team Suzuki) (Motorex Kawasaki) (CAS Honda) (Team Suzuki) (Multitek Honda)

12+16=28 13+14=27 14+13=27 10+15=25 (Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha) (Martin Honda) (Red Bull KTM)

20+0=20 8+11=19 (Van Beers Yamaha) (RWJ Honda) (MotoXtreme Kawasaki)

0+3=3

25+25=50

22+18=40

15+22=37

16+20=36

6+0=6

25+25=50

18+22=40

22+13=35 13+20=33

20+9=29

14+14=28

9+18=27

11+16=27

12+15=27

15+6=21

10+0=10

16+4=20

MX2

Christophe Pourcel Marc De Reuver

Tyla Rattray

Billy MacKenzie Antonio Cairoli

David Philippaerts

Aigar Leok

Alessio Chiodi

10 Carl Nunn

20 Jason Dougan

25+25=50 22+22=44 18+20=38 (GPKR Kawasaki) (Champ KTM) (Champ KTM) (Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha) 15+16=31 16+14=30 8+18=26 (De Carli Yamaha) (Champ KTM) (Molson Kawasaki) 10+11=21 (Van Beers Yamaha) 20+0=20 (Ricci Yamaha) (Champ KTM) 9+10=19 (Molson Kawasaki) 12+6=18

RESULTS **ROUND 5**

(RWJ Honda)

(Rinaldi Yamaha)

. (Team Suzuki)

(CAS Honda)

(RWJ Honda)

(Team Suzuki)

(Shineray Honda)

(Van Beers Yamaha) (Rinaldi Yamaha)

(Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha)

(Red Bull KTM) (Motorex Kawasaki)

Stefan Everts Steve Ramon

Ken De Dycker

Jonathan Barragan Tanel Leok

James Noble

Kevin Strijbos

Marvin van Daele

9 Manuel Priem

10 Cedric Melotte

17 Julien Bill

MX2

Billy MacKenzie

Antonio Cairoli

Marc De Reuver

Christophe Pourcel Gareth Swanepoel

Tommy Searle

Carl Nunn

Rui Goncalves

10 David Philippaerts

(Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha) 25+20=45 18+25=43 (De Carli Yamaha) 20+22=42 22+16=38 (Champ KTM) (GPKR Kawasaki) (Molson Kawasaki) 14+18=32

🧭 (Molson Kawasaki) 13+14=27 (Champ KTM) 9+15=24 Kenneth Gundersen (Ricci Yamaha) 12+10=22 8+12=20 (Silver Action KTM)

SERIES STANDINGS

1 Stefan Everts 242 points, 2 Leok 181, 3 De Dycker 168,

(Champ KTM)

4 Strijbos 165, 5 Ramon 151, 6 Barragan 150, 7 Melotte 105, 8 Tortelli 99, 9 Priem 99, 10 Leuret 93, 11 Noble 77...

13 Bill 77...18 Sword 40...23 Crockard 17...25 Hucklebridge 15

1 C Pourcel 196 points, 2 De Reuver 194, 3 Rattray 181,

4 Cairoli 162, 5 MacKenzie 150, 6 Philippaerts 120, 7 Nunn 119, 8 Gundersen 111, 9 Chiodi 111, 10 Searle 105, 12 Swanepoel 87...25 Dougan 13











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position in the overall standings.

Fujinami reluctantly offers a few words of explanation. "This is a weekend I want to forget very quickly. I started well yesterday but then suffered a very bad start to the second lap which cost me many places. Today it has been the opposite, after a bad first lap I managed to recover some positions with a stronger last lap. Now I am looking forward to the next round, my home GP, when I hope I can gain some good results to put me back in the fight for the championship.'

First round winner Antonio Bou is another inconsistent performer at the first of the two fly-away events of the season. Having made it onto the last tier of the podium on Saturday the young Beta rider bombs out 24 hours later, finishing in a potentially championship wrecking sixth place - much to the disgust of Beta boss Lapo Bianchi who has made the long trip west from Italy. Bou now sits third in the series, six points behind Lampkin.

Sherco's lone factory runner Albert Cabestany looks at a loss with no team-mate to support him in his title challenge. The likeable former indoor champion from Tarragona, Spain, was tipped as one of the main men to stop Raga taking a second successive outdoor crown but with Cabestany only managing to go 5-4 in the USA his chances are reducing round by round.

As one Spanish rider fades, another steps forward into the frame - this time in the form of Gasser pilot Jeroni Fajardo. Fourth and third positions in Sequatchie elevates him to fifth in the standings, just one point behind Fujinami and just a few more off Bou.

Although the TTC is lacking the frills that the world trials championship now demands, the sprawling site does have some of the best trial terrain to be found on the globe. The action gets under way with eight sections located in a slow flowing river that's littered with large green boulders that show little sign of previous use. These hazards draw the largest crowds but are not the most difficult on the course - instead it's the back seven sections, all slippery limestone rock faces on a steep wooded hillside, that provide the real test.

A blunder in the opening section on day one by Lampkin immediately takes the heat off Raga and the Gas Gas rider happily accepts the five-mark advantage from his British rival as the factory four-stroke spins to a halt on the final ascent. This mistake proves to be the difference between these two front runners at the halfway stage and while Dougie fights back with a single figure last lap score, Raga reacts by incredibly completing the final 15 sections for one mark less. Lampkin can count himself unlucky as on another day this closing performance would have brought him victory but today Raga is just simply too hot to stop.

Electric storms on Saturday night bring heavy rain and force the organisers to make several changes to the course as the bankings

RESULTS

| | Ro | und 3 – day one | | |
|----|----|-------------------|-----------|----|
| n | 1 | Adam Raga | (Gas Gas) | 1 |
| 2 | 2 | Dougie Lampkin | (Montesa) | 2 |
| | 3 | Toni Bou | (Beta) | 3 |
| 7 | 4 | Jeroni Fajardo | (Gas Gas) | 4 |
| 7 | 5 | Albert Cabestany | (Sherco) | 4 |
| 4 | 6 | Takahisa Fujinami | (Montesa) | 4 |
| 4 | 7 | Marc Freixa | (Scorpa) | 5 |
| 4 | 8 | James Dabill | (Beta) | 8 |
| ζ. | 9 | Shaun Morris | (Gas Gas) | 9 |
| 9 | 10 | Tadeusz Blazusiak | (Scorpa) | 11 |

| Round 3 – day two | | |
|----------------------|-----------|-----|
| 1 Adam Raga | (Gas Gas) | 24 |
| 2 Dougie Lampkin | (Montesa) | 41 |
| 3 Jeroni Fajardo | (Gas Gas) | 46 |
| 4 Albert Cabestany | (Sherco) | 48 |
| 5 Takahisa Fujinami | (Montesa) | 49 |
| 6 Toni Bou | (Beta) | 58 |
| 7 Marc Freixa | (Scorpa) | 77 |
| 8 James Dabill | (Beta) | 79 |
| 9 Shaun Morris | (Gas Gas) | 98 |
| 10 Tadeusz Blazusiak | (Scorpa) | 121 |

SERIES STANDINGS

1 Raga 74 points, 2 Lampkin 64, 3 Bou 58,

4 Fujinami 51, 5 Fajardo 50, 6 Cabestany 47,

7 Freixa 33, 8 Dabill 30, 9 Blazusiak 27,10 Morris 14

become impossibly slippery. Although still feeling the after-effects of a mystery overnight illness, Lampkin is in no mood for sympathy as he matches Raga through the first seven sections on Sunday morning.

But Dougie once again destroys his chance of victory with an unforced error as he becomes the only rider in the elite class to five section eight on the first lap. This gives Raga the breathing space he has been looking for, allowing the reigning champion to attack the remaining hazards with new confidence. Raga's last lap is absolutely stunning and leaves the rest to fight it out for the lower places. Lampkin looks jaded and weak but does just enough to keep Fajardo back in third spot.

Dougie's relatively upbeat about his results given the circumstances. "Overall it has been a positive weekend, although I can't afford to lose any more ground to Raga in the championship. They have been two good trials - yesterday I made a mistake early on that took the pressure off Raga and today I have faded just when I should have been pushing but that was due to being weak after being sick last night.

Once again the new bike has proved itself as this is the first time we have ridden it in these difficult conditions.

In the Junior class Michael Brown suffers his first defeat of the season when he finishes in third position on day one. But the Beta rider bounces back on Sunday to take the victory and go eight points clear of Saturday's winner Daniel Oliveras in the overall standings.

Youth Gasser rider Alexz Wigg completes the British cheer by taking a double win in the 125 category and in doing so moves to the top of his championship as previous series leader Loris Gubian goes 8-2 on what is a poor weekend for the French Sherco rider.



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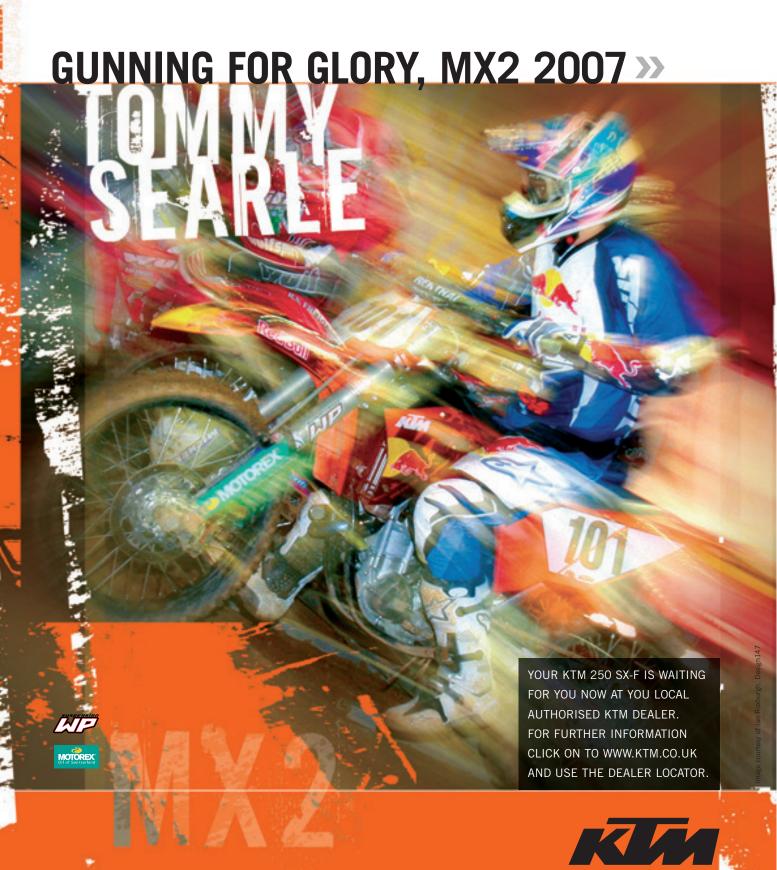








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| Oakenfold, Faster Kill Pussycat | 84590 | Lil Kim, Whoa | 13071 |
| Studio B, C'mon Get It | 84542 | Rihanna, Unfaithful | 13116 |
| Uniting Nations, Out Of Touch | 84237 | Red Hot Chilli Peppers, Tell Me Baby | 13101 |
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DUTCHOVEN!

IT'S NOT JUST THE WEATHER THAT'S **BAKING HOT IN HOLLAND - THE** ON-TRACK ACTION'S SCORCHING TOO ...

t's been a real quiet start to my season so far as the UK youth scene has been tormented by crazy weather. With nothing else to do I packed my trusty kit bag and headed to the UEM European Youth championship in Holland.

I was lucky enough to hook up with Sam Davis and his dad Higgy and some bloke called Boris for my first trip across to Europe so far this year. To say I was living in luxury was an understatement as Higgy's truck is trick with wide armchairs, a fully fitted kitchen and all the extras you would expect from an £80,000 monster mobile. So I sat back and enjoyed the ride all the way there - even when we got lost because Boris couldn't read the map properly.

When we arrived all the British riders were set up and raring to go. In the 85cc class we had Sam Davis, Scott Elderfield, Lewis Tombs, Jordan Booker, Jack Rowe, Max Anstie, Daniel Arnold and Mel Pocock and we also had Alan Keet and Luke Remmer in the 125 group.

Max Anstie produced the best result among the Brits with a barn-storming fourth overall. Max is definitely our fastest 85cc rider at the present time and is also lying fourth in the championship. Mel Pocock again gave it his all on the deep sandy surface but the rest were all suffering from the heat and in my opinion were just not fast enough on the day.

As an event it had everything – beautiful Dutch sunshine, a superb track which was prepped to perfection, hard standing pits, separate hot wash areas, showers and a superb media centre so all in all a great venue and a great event.



Dutch rider Glenn Coldenhoff is in great form on home turf



MYBESTRACE This month's My Best Race comes from Devonshire boy Will Worden. Will rides a

his month's My Best Race comes from Devonshire boy Will Worden. Will rides a KTM 125 and this season has really stepped up to the plate with some serious speed – take it away Will.

"My best race happened recently at the third round of the BSMA championship at Foxhill. I had a really good jump out of the gate but then I overshot the corner and Kirk Richards, James Cole and Ross Hill jumped up the inside of me.

"I managed to catch Ross and James and passed them real quick. Kirk was just in front until I came down the inside down one of the big hills – Josh Waterman followed and we battled for a few laps. Josh went past but I didn't give up and re-passed him going down the big hill. It was all on the last lap, I thought I had it in the bag but a couple corners later my hand slipped off the handlebars and Josh sneaked up the inside.

"Josh won but he washed out trying to take his goggles off after the finish line. Even though I finished in second I still took the overall win."



RAY'SRIBTICKLER! I had so many Ray's Rib Tickler pics to choose

I had so many Ray's Rib Tickler pics to choose from this month I didn't know which way to look. Eventually I decided on this one from Canada Heights of an unlucky dad trying to get to his son on a very muddy jump. I'm not sure who it is but I've a feeling he may work in the building industry...







m going to stay as positive as I can for What Rocks and What Sucks' this month - it's going to be hard but I'm an optimistic kind of guy so here goes ..

Rocks #1. The work put in at Foxhill recently for the BSMA championship. Not since the good old days of the GPs have I seen the track looking so good. New soil was added, jumps were rebuilt and a brand new rocking start straight was introduced which suggests that with a little tender loving care and a week of hard graft, tracks can be prepared correctly.

Rocks #2. Rider of the Month goes to Christian 'Turbo' Taylor, not only for blitzing everyone in sight at the British Masters round at Dean Moor but putting on an amazing turn of speed at the BYMX championship in Scotland - if he manages to stay on he's going to be one hard rider to catch.

Rocks #3. Dean Moor Moto Park - nice one on the hard standing pit area...other facilities take note.

Rocks #4. Effort by parents rocks, whether taking little Johnny to a local club event or putting in thousands of pounds a year to try to produce a champion in our sport. You all deserve a medal! Some people say they're all spoiled brats but I wonder how much time do the moaners spend with their nippers on the weekend? We only want the best for our kids and I can't see anything wrong in that.

Sucks #1. How on earth can we move our sport forward if we have three ex-GP riders with over 30 years of experience racing at the highest level advising a club steward at a national championship that a certain jump needs altering because it's too dangerous, only to be asked "what do you know?" - crazy but true!



TRACEY

ith two events cancelled already this year from the BSMA calendar due to bad weather, I sat down with the first lady of BSMA motocross Tracy Wratten of the BSMA committee and delved a little deeper in what makes her tick and what really gets up

DBR: With two events cancelled are you feeling a little bit stressed?

TW: "No, not stressed. I have no control of the

weather and I can't remember having so many meetings cancelled since the foot & mouth problem. I think the clubs are suffering too - I did find the extra work a little untimely but then that's life.

'I prayed for dry weather for Foxhill and I obviously don't go to church enough as I only got one day."

DBR: Your son Chris races in the Senior class. Do you ever have time to watch him race or are you always running around the pits?

TW: "I am always busy, I never stop on race day or two weeks prior to race day. However I'm still a mum and I always watch Chris albeit from a low-key position.

"I like to know he's still going round but I am a nervous mum and that is why I do what I do because it still keeps me involved with my family and I don't have to spend all day worrying."

DBR: What one thing really gets up your nose on race day?

TW: "Riding in the pits - it has always been a pet hate. All riders know they shouldn't do it and all associations have the same rule!

'This is a family orientated sport and we have lots of young children playing in the paddock. My greatest fear is that one of them will get hurt because a rider couldn't be bothered to push his bike."

DBR: If I could grant you a wish today what one thing would you like to change about

TW: "I wouldn't want to change the BSMA, just move it forward. Time waits for no man so you have to move with it. We have a wealth of experience on the top table but fresh ideas always help. I hope I have brought something to the BSMA and I have the greatest respect for Lily & Nancy as I am sure many people do."

DBR: Answer me one question, do you think parents should marshal?

TW: "Truthfully, I would love to see at national level parents with their kids. It's a difficult task sorting out who is marshalling when and where. I have tried to be fair with everyone and tried to improve a task everyone hates.

"I would much rather that the parents didn't have to marshal – it would save me some work as well. The insurance company told us we couldn't do it when we asked. Somehow or another other associations seem to get round it. If anyone could let me know how I would be grateful."

Many thanks for you time and honest answers Tracey - see you at the races.





Il you lucky guys who are making the trip to Europe for the various team events throughout the summer can now order your British des Nations shirts from Bagnalls for only £20.

Here's the list of events taking place with some general info...

The Youth MX des Nations which is taking place in France on July 12/13 kicks things off. Chris Elderfield and Howard Tombs are team managers for this event and will be picking riders shortly

A few days later on the 15/16 an international is taking place in Emman. Riders will not be picked for this event as it's open to everyone wishing to attend but the fastest four in each group will represent England in the main races. All riders can wear their Des Nations shirt for this one.

The final one of the year is the Honest International on August 5/6 in Heerde, Holland. It's the same format as at Emman but all riders attending will need a des Nations shirt. Howard Tombs will be our jury representative.

For further information on any of these events please contact Howard on 07899 841133 or if you would like to order your shirt call Bagnall's on 01584 874737.

COMMENT

I know I'm sad but I just read the December 2002 issue of DBR from front to back while tucking into a bag of Monster Munch crisps.

Rage was in the capable hands of Richard Halsey and back then the top riders in the Auto and 65cc classes are the same lads who are winning the Senior class in 2006. Some of the older lads are competing in the Maxxis British championship and GPs. So you riders who have just started or are currently racing in the nipper groups, I hope to see some of you doing the same in 2011.

I see the BYMX are changing the names of the race classes in 2007. Can someone tell me how long did it take for you guys to come up with such imaginative names as BYMX 1, 2, 3 and 4? Without sitting down and concentrating real hard I can't think of any myself but what was wrong with the old ones?

June is a mega month for racing not only do we have our British GP at Matterley Basin but Rage will be flying the flag at the world mini championship in Belgium so look out for our special feature from there in next month's superduper DBR. Until next time ride safe...

Got any youth news for Rage? Give Ray Chuss a bell on 07773 609994 or email him at dbryoutheditor@raychuss.com



hings are definitely looking up for youth motocross. Rising Stars publications have launched a series of books to introduce nippers to extreme sports and motocross just happens to be one of them. Yours truly supplied some of the pictures and SW85 BYMX rider Lewis Lloyd actually got to model for the motocross kit page.

The book is called Download Motocross and covers all aspects of the sport from kit, bikes, clubs, how to get into the sport and even a quiz page. So if you're thinking about starting MX then this book is an ideal guide to get some basic information and understanding of our wonderful sport and at only £5 it's a bargain.

For a copy go to www.risingstars-uk.com or www.amazon.co.uk or maybe try your local book store.



GOING THE DISTANCE!

I<mark>T'S BEEN A TOUCH MONTH ON THE ROAD FOR BILLY WITH LONG-HAUL FLIGHTS, 10-HOUR DRIVES AND A BROKEN HAND. OH AND HE MANAGED TO WIN A GP AS WELL!</mark>

RIGHT GUYS, working backwards we'll start at Landrake! The track was awesome – apart from the old-school massive white chunky wooden posts that I battered my hand with on the first lap of the first race! We really need to get this stuff sorted. I don't want to be the one to moan but I broke my hand! Not too serious – just a cracked fifth metacarpal – but, still, it's a niggling injury I can do without and it's hurting right now so I'm gonna be riding on painkillers for the next few weeks.

The other weird thing was that there was no tape round the track so as you exit a corner all you see is little white dots leading up to the jump. It's like looking at a join-the-dots picture with no lines! So it was really off-putting and I think it was a problem that caused most of the big crashes jumping out from the field. You would be coming out the corner and jumping blind because you had no sense of direction from the track markings! Something we have to make the clubs aware of I think. But, anyway, the track was in excellent condition so if those problems are ironed out for next year then it will be wicked.

Next up, Japan! Guess you have all heard about Japan, or will in this issue anyway, so I'll talk a little bit about the trip. Outbound I had the luxury of four seats to myself in cattle class! I lay there the whole flight, stretched out, watching movie after movie. It was nice, I hadn't had 12 hours on my own like that in ages so it was really cool to kick back and relax for once.

The journey back was a complete contrast! I thought I would be really clever and waited until I was last guy on the plane to see if there were any business class seats up front.

The plan worked, I was on and strolled straight into business and took a seat next to an Indian lady. Things were good, I had 'beat' the system and all the other Brits in cattle class were annoyed I had the balls to do it! So there I was, sat there being offered drinks every five minutes and liking some of the legroom. Not £300 worth of legroom may I add but since it was free I felt satisfied!

As the flight took off I felt happy, sat there with my reasonably sized seat, sharing conversation with some well-travelled Indian woman who loves her mum's curries...but as the flight got through the first hour I realized she was actually a bit annoying and this legroom was definitely not worth the money or even the effort I put into claiming my free seat.

The cramps and headache started setting in from dehydration after two hard 40-minute motos, a six-hour bus drive and still no sleep and my eyes started to hurt from being over-tired, the sticky sweating sensation when you get angry. Any position I moved into was uncomfortable. Frustration began to build, my knees kept hitting the seat in front of me, my neck was sore and my jeans were starting to pull the hairs out my legs!

You might think the few days after winning a grand prix are full of enjoyment and happiness... wrong! It's hard work winning a GP, every ounce of effort goes into it and I was knackered! This time it led to a sense of humour failure!

I'm not really fond of Japanese food either (not

that I can eat it either because of my allergy). I had my bag packed full of all my gluten free food, 8kg of it! We rocked up at the airport and all of our baggage was too heavy and being Virgin Atlantic it was £42 for every kg over the weight allowance! This was proving a huge problem as our combined weight was near 91kg – 91x42=£3822! Yes, that's right, they were trying to charge us nearly four grand for all our stuff!

So a quick phone call to Nick who had dropped us off and we quickly off-loaded some spares. I managed to play the guilt trip card with my food and told them I would die without it so the nice man let me off! In the end Steve's card got spanked for £700. We didn't tell him until we landed in Japan!

And finally, Germany! Germany was the first time I got my bike working the way I wanted. Everything was sweet and for me to get fourth overall on that track was like winning! Every time I've been there I've left with a broken bone so I was happy to come



away with a decent result and some confidence in the bike. It's been the turning point of the season so far because I've been feeling awesome on the Yamaha since then. Andrew Bell has worked his nuts off getting my suspension right and without any technical back-up we've done a great job.

I flew out to Germany but I wished I hadn't. It took me nine hours from when I left my house to arriving at the track and to fill those nine hours was a nightmare. Waking up ridiculously early, driving tired, waiting at the airport, catching buses from long stay parking. It was rubbish! I would have given anything to be sat driving my camper at a leisurely pace listening to some decent tunes. Definitely not flying anymore, it sucks!

So on the way back I got a lift with Jason Dougan and his mechanic and we had a really good time. We were all in a big convoy with RWJ, Hucklebridge etc and we all had walkie-talkies! What a laugh, the whole 10 hours or so driving was taken up with piss-take accents, slagging each other off and pure torment *chuckle*! It even makes me laugh now thinking about it. Huck was on the receiving end of most of the slagging, bless him! Poor old Monster!

Anyway folks, I'm gonna rest my little hand now. I feel like Jeremy Beadle! But the swelling should be gone before the weekend hopefully and another long trip to Bulgaria!

Until next time, behave or I'll tell my dad on you all...

M











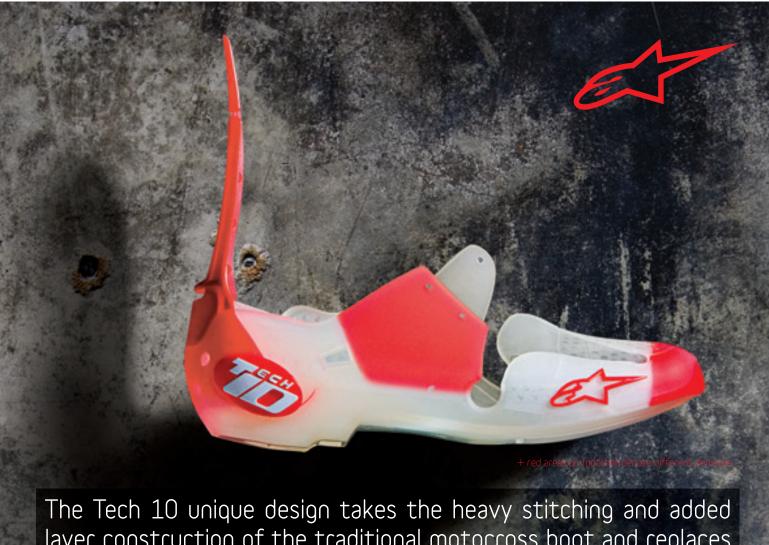








FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT NO FEAR MX DIVISION AT +33 442.163.604 WWW.NOFEARMX.COM



The Tech 10 unique design takes the heavy stitching and added layer construction of the traditional motocross boot and replaces it with a one-piece, four-density, engineered low-profile bottom. Rider benefits: Dedicated protection over the different areas of the foot with differentiated flexibility—reduced dimensional around the foot, reduced weight and superior durability.

